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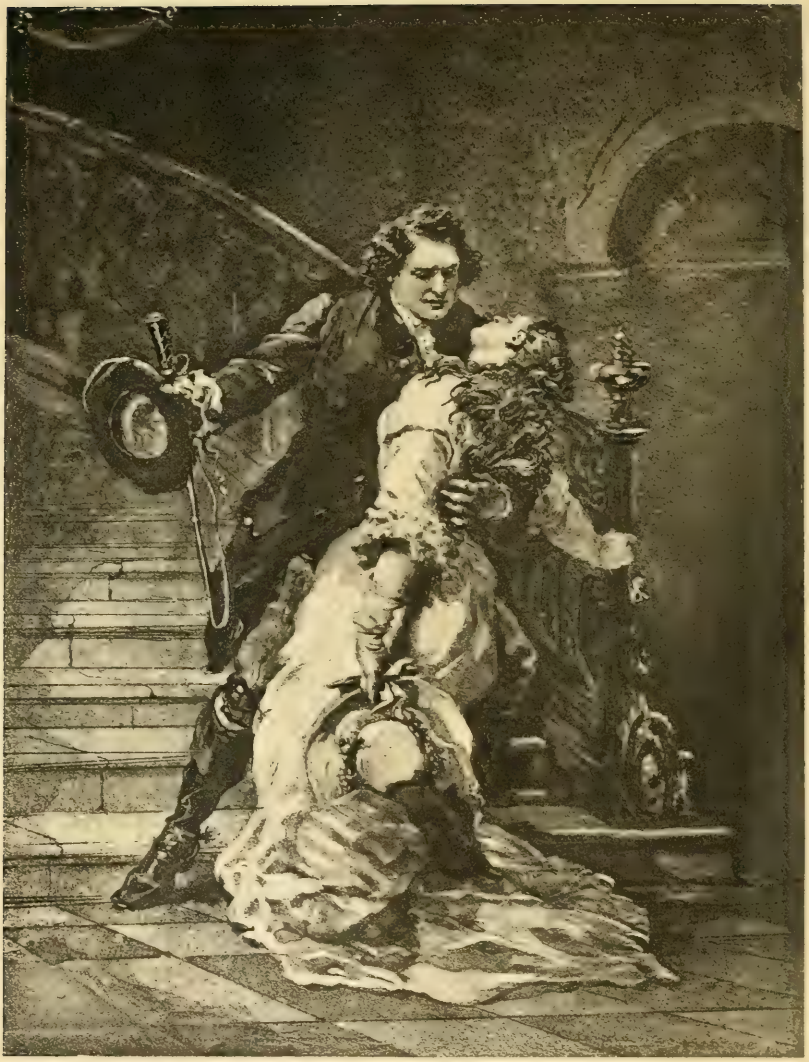

"Speak then! I am prepared for anything"

From the painting by E. Lami

Courtiers and Favourites of Royalty

Memoirs of the Court of France With Contemporary and Modern Illustrations Collected from the French National Archives

BY

LEON VALLÉE
LIBRARIAN AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

Memoirs of Madame d' Épinay

IN THREE VOLUMES
VOL. II

Paris
Société des Bibliophiles
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Letter of Diderot, asking that the King, Louis XV, authorize him to sell his library to the Empress of Russia

From the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris "Manuscrits français, nouvelles acquisitions, No. 31, page 57"

Photographed under the direction of Leon Vallée especially for this work

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Monseigneur

Reponse que le Roy trouve bon qu'il accepte

R. Les. May. 1766

La difficulté de pourvoir aux besoins de la vie et l'Impossibilité de pourvoir à l'education d'un enfant avec une fortune aussi bornée que la mienne, avoient enfin determiné le pere et l'epoux à depouiller l'homme de lettres de ses livres. il y avoit longtems que je cherchois parmi mes concitoyens quelqu'un qui les voulut acquerir, sans avoir pu le trouver, lorsqu'on en a fait la proposition à l'Imperatrice de Russie qui a accepté ma bibliotheque et qui m'en a fait delivrer le prix, a condition que j'en resterois le dépositaire et que je recevrois [illegible]

[illegible] que je [illegible] à ca former. Ce sont ses propres expressions. Je ne sçais s'il faut appeller ces cent pistolles une pension ou un simple honoraire ; mais je n'ignore pas qu'un sujet ne peut rien accepter d'une puissance etrangere, sans y etre autorisé par la permission de son Roi. J'ose vous supplier, monseigneur, de demander cette permission pour un homme à qui la faveur qu'on vient de lui faire est si necessaire.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE IMPÉRIALE MAN.

Je suis avec un très profond respect

Monseigneur

~~a Paris~~
Ce 27. avril.
1765

Votre très humble et très
obeissant serviteur
Diderot

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OF

MADAME D'ÉPINAY

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OF

MADAME D'ÉPINAY

CHAPTER VII (*continued*).

Continuation of the Diary.

Eight days later.

O brilliant day which night and sorrow never darken, ever illumined by the supreme truth, by peace and repose! O day of perfect security, ever free from change! O day of death, will you never come? Would to God that this happy day had already appeared, and that the course of time were over for me! What! the man who has betrayed me is the man for whom I have sacrificed everything—my duty, my peace of mind, my self-respect? For him I have defied the opinion of the world: I have exposed myself to censure: I have stifled the cries of my conscience. Others have seen me carried away by the passion which absorbed my whole being: they have dared to attack, to harass me: and I have lost the right to defend myself. I have endured all, because he recompensed me for all.

They have gone: they are continually face to face. For a fortnight they will never leave each other, day or night. Everything around me is withered. I look for him: I do not find him: and that is my least sorrow. I cannot fix my eyes upon any spot which does not remind me how passionately I have been loved: the day he left, my grief was wearisome to him: he could not restrain his joy. Can I recall those moments without being ready to die of sorrow? I do not wish to forget anything. May the excess of my grief either kill or cure me! The two husbands left in a berlin with the two maids at seven o'clock in the evening: Madame de Jully, Madame de Versel, M. de Francueil, and M. de Maurepaire followed in another at three o'clock in the morning. This arrangement was made so as to make sure of post-horses. The distance is thirty-five leagues. Madame d'Houdetot lives close to the sea, and her house is the ostensible goal of this journey.

I left my mother to go and say good-bye to Madame de Jully. I reached her house at about eight o'clock. M. de Jully, M. de Versel, and the maids had just left. Madame de Jully was lying on a sofa at the end of the drawing-room: Jelyotte was at her feet: I sat down in a large easy-chair by her side. Francueil might have taken a seat by me, but he was walking up and down the room with Gauffecourt and M. de Maurepaire. The latter, humming a tune between his teeth, said: "They leave at eight o'clock: they will reach Rouen in good time."

FRANCUEIL. And so shall we, if we start at three.

MADAME DE JULLY. At three? We must be in the carriage by two.

MAUREPAIRE. It will certainly be three. You will see that Madame de Versel will keep you waiting.

MADAME DE JULLY. Ah! not long enough to delay our departure. She is to be here at nine o'clock for supper.

FRANCUEIL. It is that now: she has not come——

I (*abruptly*). It is not yet a quarter to. Jelyotte, some snuff, if you please.

JELYOTTE (*in a whisper*). I hope that you will sometimes allow me to offer you some. They will write to you for me. That will be my whole consolation.

I said to myself: "He is too happy: he still believes that he is loved: but, if he were, could she make up her mind to leave him?" He went and sat down again at Madame de Jully's feet. I fancy he sometimes squeezed them, while she looked at him with her gracefully languishing air. Francueil at last came and leaned over the back of my chair, and Gauffecourt, seeing this, took M. de Maurepaire with him to the window to talk. Francueil said little to me: he spoke to me with an air of embarrassment rather than of regret at leaving me, and declared that the excursion had been arranged without his knowing how. "I am very unfortunate," said he, "in not having been able

to yield to the wish you expressed that I should not go on this visit." "I believe I am dreaming," I said. "I am not used to refusals on your part: in this case, they will perhaps cost us both dear."

FRANCUEIL. This proves that it has not been in my power to obey you. Pray let us say no more about it: my visit will not be a long one. I have a thousand excuses for cutting it short: my own affairs, my father's health——

I. Might have served as an excuse for not going at all, rather than for cutting it short. If you even now wished—— Oh! it will kill me!

FRANCUEIL. Really, this is unreasonable. You are crying: do you intend to cause a scene? Come, my dearest, really, your grief is killing me. I am sufficiently to be pitied, I swear to you. In Heaven's name, stop. Let us talk of something else. Write to me, I entreat you. Let me hear from you the day after to-morrow at Rouen: we shall be there three days. Answer me, then.

I. Yes, certainly . . . perhaps, however: I am not sure about it.

FRANCUEIL (*squeezing my hand and smiling*). Ah! you will be more generous than you say. You will write to me.

GAUFFECOURT (*from the window*). There is one of Madame de Versel's footmen. I bet you she is sending a message to say that she is ill, and can't go.

ALL. Nonsense!

I. Ah! if it could be!

JELYOTTE. I should not be surprised. Her baby was born only six weeks ago: it is not over prudent——

FRANCUEIL. Nonsense! What does that matter? She is in excellent health.

MAUREPAIRE. I wager that her mother, who, as everybody knows, is a most methodical woman, does not think our arrangement quite orthodox. A pity, isn't it, Francueil?

JELYOTTE. But it may very well be the case.

MADAME DE JULLY. It would be very rude.

Meanwhile, the footman arrived with a message that Madame de Versel would not come to supper, and that she would be with us at twelve o'clock. We sat down to table. I ate nothing. Everybody was very lively, except Jelyotte and myself. We remained seated till eleven o'clock. I was greatly surprised to hear Francueil say, on leaving the table, that he had an hour's business to attend to at home, and that he would be back before twelve o'clock. I neither heard nor saw anything until his return. This unexpected "business" struck everyone as strange. It occurred to me that he had gone to look for Madame de Versel. I saw that the same idea had occurred to each of the company: but M. de Maurepaire was the only one who openly expressed it. The rest remained silent, no doubt out of consideration for me. I could not endure it. I was in a state of violent agitation. I went into my sister's room, and flung myself at her feet. "Sister, sister, I shall die if this journey takes place. How cruel you are! Is this the friendship

you declared you felt for me? You are killing Jelyotte and myself. It only rested with you—you can still—do not go." My sobs choked my utterance. "Calm yourself," said Madame de Jully. "If I had anticipated your present condition, I certainly would not have let this excursion be arranged: but it is too late to stop it now."

I. Oh, sister! they worship each other, it is evident. They are together now. How will Francueil venture to show himself before me again?

Madame de Jully. If they were agreed, my child, you would gain nothing by stopping this journey: on the contrary, they would be all the better for it. But I promise you not to lose sight of them for an instant. I will give you an account of all that takes place. Madame de Versel and myself will sleep in the same room——

I. Sister, do one thing more for me. In the carriage, have Francueil in front of you.

Madame de Jully. I promise you.

I. Fool that I am! They will see and talk to each other continually. Oh, sister! all is over for me. It will kill me.

We heard a carriage and went back again, thinking that it was Madame de Versel. It was Francueil. He came in with his watch in his hand, and, looking round the room, said: "It is very late—nearly one o'clock: I beg your pardon: has not Madame de Versel come yet?"

Maurepaire. Bah! no. We thought it was you who were keeping her. What have you done with her?

FRANCUEIL. I have done nothing with her. I assure you I wish I had: but I hope, for her own sake, that she knows better than I do what has become of her. *(Turning back.)* Really now, hasn't she come yet?

I. You see that well enough: (*in a whisper*) and you know it still better.

FRANCUEIL (*in a whisper*). That is absurd; you are behaving like a madwoman. Where can she be? Madame de Jully, have you sent for the post-horses? It is time; before they get here——

MADAME DE JULLY. Good heavens! of course. Come, Maurepaire, see to this; will you also pay them on the journey?

MAUREPAIRE. Very good. (*Coming back.*) But I should like Francueil to give us back Madame de Versel first. Have you got her in your pocket by chance?

FRANCUEIL. Deuce take me if I know what has become of her! But it is very absurd of her to make people wait for her.

They were walking two and two. Jelyotte was talking in a low voice with Madame de Jully, I with Gauffecourt. Francueil came and took my arm, as if to help me to walk. From time to time he kept saying to me: "I believe Madame de Versel will not come." At last I lost patience, and said aloud: "Excuse me, she will not keep you waiting for her any longer."

MADAME DE JULLY. What is Francueil saying?

FRANCUEIL. I was saying, Madame, that it

appears that Madame de Versel is very comfortable where she is.

GAUFFECOURT (*between his teeth*). Let her stop there.

I. Ah! she will do nothing of the kind.

FRANCUEIL. I wish she wouldn't come; we could do very well without her. (*In a whisper.*) She must be with her lover.

I. She is there no longer.

FRANCUEIL. I hear a carriage. It is she.

I. Didn't I tell you so?

MADAME DE JULLY. It is only half-past one. We can say nothing to her, for the horses are not here yet.

JELYOTTE. Well! is it she?

MAUREPAIRE. Here are the post-horses and a coach for M. Gauffecourt.

GAUFFECOURT. It will have time to wait.

ALL. And Madame de Versel?

MAUREPAIRE. No Madame de Versel. Come, my dear Francueil, give her up before we have you searched. I am pleased to tell you that, had it not been for me, the trunks and portmanteaus would have been forgotten; they are fastening them on now.

MADAME DE JULLY. Good! and my little box, by the way; where is that to be put? See to that, Maurepaire, do.

FRANCUEIL. But your little box, if I may say so without offence, is a large chest; where the deuce do you intend to stow it away?

MAUREPAIRE. Madame, there is no room for

your chest or little box anywhere. Cannot you manage without it? What is there inside?

MADAME DE JULLY. I know nothing about it. My maids have told me I want it; that is all I know. You have only got to open it. Look, here is the key.

MAUREPAIRE. The deuce! it is only your diamonds, your jewels, your purse, three night-caps, three chemises.

The inventory caused loud shouts of laughter.

MADAME DE JULLY. Well, what are we to do with all this? Come, let us each put something in our pockets and the chemises in my work-bag, and let us leave the box there.

GAUFFECOURT. There is Madame de Versel.

I (*clasping Francueil's arm*). Good-bye, then! . . . I am dying.

FRANCUEIL. What is the matter with you? What folly! Hush! Hush!

I. If this woman could know how she makes me suffer, she would not be so cruel as you.

I did not hear what excuse he made. Madame de Versel had no rouge on, her hair was in disorder, and she really looked ugly enough. They started, and, in spite of Madame de Jully's promise, Francueil took his seat facing Madame de Versel. Gauffecourt dragged me back to my room. For two days I hardly knew where I was; I pretended to be suffering from the fatigue of a sleepless night, that I might remain undisturbed behind my curtains. I have only seen Gauffecourt, Jelyotte, and Duclos. I came here

yesterday, happily alone. I wanted to be here so as to behold again, undisturbed, all the places in which Francueil used to take such delight. Alas! I am not often in the same place as my body; I am where my thoughts carry me, and that is always where the object of my affections is.

Continuation of the Diary.

After supper yesterday, I said to M. d'Épinay: "If your affairs had permitted, I should have proposed to you that we also should pay a short visit to Madame la Comtesse d'Houdetot. I have never seen the sea." "Would it please you?" he said. "Nothing can be easier; we can post there together in my *vis-à-vis*."[1] I did not like the idea of travelling alone with him, and pretended that I thought the journey too expensive and difficult. Gauffecourt insisted; my mother also considered the visit very suitable. M. d'Épinay invited Gauffecourt to come with us: then I gladly consented. We start the day after to-morrow. We shall arrive at my sister-in-law's without having told anyone beforehand. Gauffecourt assures me that I shall be well received. If only I were sure of it! But, if I am to be in the way, I shall soon notice it. We shall only be nine days altogether. I am starting in an hour for Paris, where I shall spend to-morrow; I shall inform Duclos and Jelyotte. My business, hopes, and fears are more than I can put up with. Probably I shall not write to you until my return.

[1] A berlin with only a seat for one at each end.

I am just starting. I am giving myself up to the hope of being kindly received. At least, I shall have two days happiness and illusion. I have seen Duclos. He says that it is a mad, an indecent arrangement; that people will declare I am running after Francueil; that Gauffecourt must be mad to accompany me.

M. d'Houdetot's Estate, near Rouen.

During the first part of our journey we did not speak. My husband was asleep. M. Gauffecourt guessed the different ideas which kept my mind in a state of confusion. We conversed by signs. In the afternoon he betook himself to his chaise, and left me alone with M. d'Épinay, who began by addressing insipid flatteries to me, which were the more displeasing to me as they prevented me from dreaming and thinking of the hopes with which I looked forward to my visit. But at last I did not escape with compliments; he begged, entreated, and conjured me to live with him again, declaring that he had never loved me so much. I answered him as the falseness of his whole behaviour towards me deserved. He spared no effort to overcome my objections, while I did my utmost to persuade him that all that he might say or do would be of no avail. The journey was a veritable torture to me; it seemed unendurably long. The embarrassment of Francueil at my arrival, his cold reception of me, my husband's persecutions—ah, what punishment! Why have I not the courage?

Then—all would be over. I certainly had this courage once, and then I was not so much to be pitied. He loved me then, and his love gave me nerve and energy; but he loves me no longer. I have become faint-hearted; all spirit in me is dead.

She is wearing on her finger the ring which I have for a long time asked Francueil to give me, and which he always refused. He is wearing hers. What further proof do I want? I should like to go back to-morrow. I should like—I do not know what I should like.

Two days later.

He came to see me in my room yesterday. I burst into tears when he entered. I tried to conceal my grief from him, as well as my Diary in which I was writing. He asked me why I was crying; it was useless for me to remain silent; he grew angry. I surrendered, and tremblingly handed him what I had just written. As he read it, he turned pale, and, throwing himself at my feet, said: "I should be a monster to prefer a little affected creature, a mere child, a pretty doll, to the most adorable woman in the world." "Madame de Versel deserves none of these epithets," I said to him, "and there are too many of them for me to believe that you are so indifferent towards her." "I swear to you, my dearest friend," he replied, "that Madame de Versel will never be anything to me." But then—the ring? It is merely a joke. He will get it back, since I

Francueil Protesting His Innocence

for me to remain silent;

prefer a

attach such importance to it, even if he should be obliged to call in the assistance of M. de Versel to recover it. But why is he always by her side? He does not know what to do, and she is amusing. Her artlessness is diverting. At last, I felt somewhat calmer. We talked for nearly two hours as quietly as the state of my feelings permitted. I told him about my husband's amorous persecutions. He thinks that M. d'Épinay is anxious to get me to discontinue the "separate maintenance" arrangement, which troubles him, and makes me, in a manner, independent of him.

After this conversation we went back to the drawing-room with Gauffecourt, and, shortly afterwards, we were joined by all the rest of the company. This little Madame de Versel is sometimes awkward and almost ugly. At other times, she is full of grace and refinement, and her features sparkle with intelligence. Since our conversation, Francueil seems rather more devoted to me. But still there is an air of constraint about him. He does not speak to Madame de Versel, or, if he says a word to her, it is in a whisper or is open to two interpretations. I do not know whether I am prejudiced, but there seems to me something entirely unnatural in this behaviour.

I cannot help feeling doubtful. Let him speak; let him confess everything. Though he were a thousand times guiltier than I imagine, I would forgive him, and regain my peace of mind. Ah! my greatest misfortune would be to lose him! What would I not agree to, if only I could retain posses-

sion of his heart? But I do not wish to be deceived. This is a compensation necessary to my wounded vanity; for I feel that a frank confession would secure his pardon, and at least restore my tranquillity. I say no more about happiness; there is no more for me. Yesterday, she said to him in a low voice: "You are not polite, M. de Francueil; you accuse me of caprice, and are always full of it yourself. You speak to me in one way, and act in another. One never finds you the same in the morning as you were the night before. What is the cause of that?" Francueil answered her indifferently, left his seat abruptly, and came and talked to me with a cheerfulness and gaiety which I am quite unable to understand. And yet, now and again, he loses himself in thought, and has fits of ill-temper without any apparent reason. They all leave to-morrow; we give them two days' start. I must consent to lose sight of them for four days.

Continuation of the Diary.

Épinay.

We have been here some days. Francueil came with me; he expects to stay for five days. Madame de Versel is coming at the end of the week, and Gauffecourt has promised to stay as long as she remains here. As for Madame de Jully, she has been seized with redoubled affection for Jelyotte, which will keep her in Paris as long as it lasts.

Francueil's attention is not entirely devoted to myself, but to everything that is dear to me. For instance, there is no kind of attention that he does not show my mother; he gives music and drawing lessons to my son all day, with as much enthusiasm and care as a regular master. The child seems to have great natural abilities for these two accomplishments.

The other day, M. d'Épinay brought Linant a very nice coat, with an agreement for an income of 500 livres; I do not know if I have already told you. The poor pedant is quite amazed at it; he bursts into laughter and shows his white teeth, by way of expressing his gratitude; but he looks rather stiff in secular attire. He squeezes his elbows together, and crosses the skirts of his coat as if it were a dressing-gown.

I am uneasy at present, because I have no longer cause for uneasiness. I do not know whether my mind and eyes are bewitched by prejudices; but, since Madame de Versel has been with us, it seems to me that Francueil rather avoids than runs after her. He starts for Paris to-morrow, and says that he will remain there until he has gone.

The next day.

Francueil started this morning, and Madame de Versel and myself were left alone. After dinner, we sent my son for a walk with Linant, and settled down, opposite each other, at our tapestry-frames. The conversation turned, natu-

rally enough, upon the lot of a woman who has a lover. Madame de Versel's features display a mixture of simplicity and shrewdness which gives her utterances a meaning which the same phrases would not convey in the mouth of another. At other times, she gazes fixedly at me, and seems as astonished as a child.

She was in front of her tapestry-frame, playing with her snuff-box, and not working at all. "I think," she said, "that a woman who has a lover is very unfortunate; there can be no more peace of mind for her." With my head bent over my work, with which I pretended to be busy, I said: "What is the reason of that?" "Why, the fear of anyone knowing it." "If her conduct is prudent and discreet, no one will ever know it." "But they suspect it, and that is the same thing," said Madame de Versel, then, laughing, she added: "I have been so often told, during my childhood, that errors of this kind are written upon the forehead, that, as soon as I see a woman to whom the world assigns a lover, I look at her, and, as I see nothing, I am always tempted to believe, in the bottom of my heart, that she has been falsely accused." "You see, then," I rejoined, laughing, "that people do *not* know anything about it." "Yes, people like myself, who do not know how to read; but others do. And then it is not only this fear which disturbs her, there is her lover's character to be considered." "Ah! that depends upon her choice. I confess it is difficult for her to make a good one." "I think it is impossible.

Are not all men unjust? Under pretence of loving us, of wishing to make us happy, of having one and the same will which is always their own, they overmaster us and make us responsible for their whims."

I was too convinced of the truth of this not to agree. I was astonished to find her so experienced, and to hear her talk so seriously. It was of importance to me to push this conversation further. I did not venture to ask her who had instructed her so well. I turned round, saying: "However, there is a possible way to avoid being deceived." "What is that?" she rejoined. "To take the advice of people who are well acquainted with the real character of the man for whom one may feel an inclination, or who may hope to arouse one." "Ah!" said Madame de Versel, laughing, "that would be all right, when it was a question of marriage, but lovers are in too great a hurry to make enquiries. Besides, to be sure of what one was about, it would be necessary to have recourse to some dissatisfied mistress, who would have reasons for frightening you."

This remark made my heart beat violently. I rejoined sharply: "And that is just what it would be good to know. All voluntary engagements are more sacred than any other, and he who breaks them is guilty, very guilty." "Good heavens!" rejoined Madame de Versel, utterly astonished, "how warmly you speak!" I immediately bent down over my work, and, rapidly making a few stitches, said to her: "The fact is, that the only real misfortune in loving is to cease

to be loved, and I cannot endure the indifference with which the world regards it. Good heavens! how hot it is; don't you find it so?" "I? no, indeed; I am frozen. There is a draught through that door——" "You have only to shut it," I said, getting up; after which I drew near to her again, and resumed my work. "I cannot condemn a woman," said Madame de Versel, "when she loves and is tenderly loved. I will even say, between ourselves, that I do not exactly know how she is to resist it." "Y-e-s, it is difficult," I replied, greatly moved, and smiling against my will; "but—one ought to be very careful, one is so often deceived. You are young, my dear friend; you have not had much experience. I tremble for you." Madame de Versel blushed, and then, with an air of surprise, asked me: "What is it you are talking about? What makes you think that I am in the position—I have said nothing which can——" "And I say nothing," I replied, continuing my work; "no, I am attacking your inexperience generally. I say that appearances are deceptive. I ask your pardon, but, to judge by your manner, I should think I have hit the mark without intending it. You are silent; it would be amusing if I had given you good advice." "Nonsense! what folly!" answered Madame de Versel, somewhat embarrassed. "In the first place, I have no faith in lovers; and, in the next place, temper, temper! I am terribly afraid of it, and I find that it is a general failing amongst men." "What has given you this opinion? We see

nearly the same people, and I do not find that any of them show it." Madame de Versel began to think, and then replied: "Tell me, Madame d'Épinay, do you know little De Berville?" "I have met him sometimes," I replied in a firmer tone. "Why do you ask me?" "Oh! for no particular reason. Because he is a good-looking lad, too good-looking." "I do not agree with you. He is intelligent, his features are refined, he looks honourable. He appears to me as simple as a child." "Not altogether; he is rather inclined to become a coxcomb. He is always talking about the favour shown him by women." "That is a fault easily corrected in a well-born lad." "There is one thing which I dislike in love," added Madame de Versel, as if she had quite forgotten little De Berville; "and that is, as we were saying just now, that it cannot always last." "That is true," I answered; "and he who loves last is greatly to be pitied." "I have not experienced it myself, but I have been witness of an incident of this kind, which I believe will protect me, for the rest of my life, from the misfortune of forming a violent attachment." "There is no doubt that, sooner or later, this misfortune is to be feared. It rarely happens that we are the first to cease loving. Men have no scruples about being unfaithful, and do not admit that we have any right to complain of it. As for myself, I should, without any comparison, prefer a rupture."

"You are right; but do you imagine that there are women vile enough to find pleasure in

taking away another woman's lover?" "You think like an angel," I said to her with delight. "There is no doubt that a woman must be an utterly vile wretch to amuse herself with another's despair. But I push my scruples even further," I added, going up to her. "I should like to be sure, before listening to a man, that he was absolutely free. His word would not satisfy me; I should be inclined to make enquiries." "That is harder," she answered; "but, when it is possible, one ought to do so." "Oh, you delightful creature! you are charming," I cried, embracing her. "You beautiful soul! I am enchanted with you." "How funny you are, Madame d'Épinay," she exclaimed, laughing with an air of utter astonishment. "I must embrace you as well, for I have only repeated what you said yourself. Come, give me a kiss." "With all my heart." "But why should we be so delighted and astonished, when we hear something that only proves we are not dishonourable, for what we have just said proves nothing else; and here we are in a state of ecstasy, as if we had made the most glorious discovery in the world." "My queen, I am afraid that that does not do much honour to the people whom we have known." "No; I think that that is not peculiar to us. It seems to me that everyone is like that."

"So then, you think it is difficult to resist a lover who loves fondly?" "Yes; especially when he sheds tears," she answered; "do you remember? how came I to say that?" "Apropos

of little De Berville and many others whose names you do not mention." "What! did I say ——?" "No." "Ah! Madame d'Épinay, you are spiteful; that is not right." "Not at all," I replied, laughing. "You did not indeed tell me that M. de Berville was in love with you, but I guessed it; it is not your fault. Besides, I think he is right, and, if he asks my advice, I shall tell him to weep bitterly." "No, no, I beg you," she eagerly rejoined; "do not tell him, nor ——." Then, after stopping short for a moment, she went on: "Seriously speaking, do not believe ——." "What a child you are! Do not be afraid. But who else is there that I must not tell?" "Nobody, nobody at all, I assure you," she replied eagerly.

This eagerness on her part disturbed me and caused me to reflect for a moment; and, as I knew neither what I was saying, nor what I ought to say, I asked her whether she loved little De Berville or not. She assured me that she did not. "Then you will have no difficulty in refusing him?" I said. "How she is making me confess!" she replied. "But, my dear friend, are you particularly interested in me?" "Interested!" I answered eagerly, feeling very uneasy and disturbed in heart, "greatly! I swear to you. Everything you do, everything you say—if you only knew how it affected me! You cannot think how greatly my feelings—your interests—but what were we saying?" I added, clasping her hand. "Ah! Madame d'Épinay, really, I am quite

alarmed," she said, with an air of great simplicity and astonishment. "Why so?" "Ah! a piece of foolishness without rhyme or reason," she answered, laughing with all her might. "But, judging from the way in which you clasped my hands, and the eagerness of your expressions, I said to myself, 'Suppose it should be a lover in disguise?'" "Have no fear," I said to her, laughing at her simplicity, "my feelings for you are very different." "Ah! I believe it; I am only joking. But why has your voice changed so?" "Has it? My dear friend, it is owing to my sympathy and my desire to see you with a lover who could make you happy; but he must be a man whose trustworthiness and loyalty can be depended upon, a man such as it is, unfortunately, impossible to find." "Well, my queen, if you want me to tell you the truth, I should like it also, for I am tired of seeing M. de Versel enjoying himself, and passing my time alone." "That is what I call speaking frankly, that is excellent; but there is the question of choice. Do you love anyone?" "Alas! yes," she said, with a sigh. "Who is it? Well, you do not answer?" "Ah! I cannot tell you, Madame d'Épinay; do not ask me." "Why? you cannot tell me; that is very singular." "The reason is that I fear—I am afraid of not being loved, and I am equally afraid of being loved." "There is no doubt that you are loved," I cried. "What!" she rejoined, utterly astonished, "do you know who it is? Do not tell me, do not tell me. Perhaps you no longer think well of me," she continued, putting her

hands over her eyes. "Let us talk of something else." "I do not understand you," I said, thinking I understood her only too well; "can it be possible?" Putting her hand over my mouth, she said: "Hush!"

We remained silent for some time. I did not know what to think of her behaviour towards me, or what was the correct interpretation to put upon her words. I wanted to make myself clear about it. "Well," I said to her, "do not tell me a word; leave me to guess. Only give me the names of all those who are in love with you, for without doubt you have a number of admirers." "Not too many," she said, "only two or three at most; little De Berville and the Marquis of S * * *." "Yes," I answered, "those are hardly lovers at all; but how about those who are very devoted?" She began to laugh, and made no answer. "And M. de Maurepaire?" I said. "Nonsense! you are joking. His head has been turned by Madame de Jully; and, between ourselves, I believe that she is making game of him." "Let us leave the absent in peace; appearances are often deceptive in such cases, and one ought not to pass an unfavourable judgment without due consideration. Let us return to yourself. Come now, I am convinced, for instance, that M. de Francueil is in love with you, and that he is not one of the lukewarm lovers." "Nonsense! what makes you think that?" "Well, all the indications of a violent passion; he has all the symptoms of it when he is near you."

I trembled while waiting for her answer.

"I will admit that I have sometimes thought so," she said, with an air of considerable embarrassment, "but he is subject to unaccountable caprice. At times he is cold, then he is abrupt, even rude, then again, so tender. He is very whimsical. I entreat you, my queen, forget that I have spoken to you about him. Besides, it is only supposition. At least, perhaps, he does not think of me at all." "Ah!" I replied; "I answer for it that he does. You are more certain of it than you say, and I am positive that he has often spoken to you about it." "This is very amusing," answered Madame de Versel, quite surprised at the firm tone I had just taken. "Who then has given you such accurate information?" "Is it true or not? You are silent. In this case you have told me too much." "But suppose it were true?" "What are you afraid of? Finish what you were going to say." "You are dragging my secrets from me," she said to me, throwing her arms round my neck. "It is impossible for me to distrust you. There is no resisting you; that is just what I was told."

I had no doubt that my unhappiness had reached its height, and I resolved to say nothing about it to Madame de Versel, not so much in reality out of consideration for wounded vanity as to spare her the shame of having been deceived. At the same time, I also determined to force Francueil to decide between us, if she reciprocated his feelings. "But," she added, "is it true that you are indiscreet and sarcastic?" "Who has told

you that?" "Francueil; for this reason, he particularly impressed upon me never to let Madame de Jully or yourself have any suspicion that he was in love with me." "You naughty flirt! A nice portrait of me he has drawn for you! So, then, he is in love with you?" "Madly; you would pity him." "You love him; and—does he know it?" "If he thought so, he would not be so unhappy, but—eh! what is the matter with you? You do not seem well." "Excuse me; it is nothing; only my usual complaint. Do not take any notice of it. Well?" "Well, he has been in love with me for more than five months. He persecutes me. I have been several times tempted to yield out of pity, even for the sake of satisfaction, for——" "That is just what you must never do," I said eagerly. "You could expect nothing but shame and sorrow from such an arrangement. No; you must not lead him to hope at all, you must tell him plainly——" "But perhaps you love him?" "Alas! I do what I can. I wish I could with all my heart; but ——" "At least, I should have no cause to reproach myself." "How so? On the contrary——" "I understand nothing of what you are telling me. You are silent. I cannot guess this strange secret. Madame, it is always a bad plan to force one's tastes, to exaggerate one's feelings to oneself, above all, to exaggerate them to others." "Madame, your ceremonious tone is very odd at this moment. Do you want to encourage me to confide in you? You have singular fits of absent-

mindedness. Come, I must tell you everything, blush in your arms, and confess that I am labouring in vain to cure myself of a passion which tortures me. I adore M. de W***, and I am loved by him as well."

"Ah!" I cried, "I breathe again. And where is the harm in that? Love him; you cannot do better. Embrace me, my dear friend!" "What makes you so delighted? I see that you do not know ——." "What?" "Everybody says that he loved my mother once, and even that he left her for me." "Everybody says so. But he is the person who ought to know; what does *he* say?" "He flatly denies it; but that means nothing, for, unfortunately, he has not a reputation for being too scrupulous. The one thing certain is that, ever since he has shown attention to me, my mother has taken a violent dislike to me." "I admit that is a painful position. But, as soon as you have given your heart to him, it is evident that you cannot belong to another without showing a want of respect for yourself. Embrace me, my dear friend, you have saved my life." "But do you, in turn, explain the cause of your delight." "Do you know why Francueil was so afraid of Madame de Jully and myself?" "Why?" "Because he was betraying me for your sake." "Oh, heavens!" cried Madame de Versel, "what have I done?" "Do not be afraid," I said to her. "He shall never know that you have told me anything. Never shall the slightest complaint escape my lips. I am too ac-

customed to stifle them. If you knew all the harm you have done me!" "What! you noticed it then?" "Only too well. Alas! under whatever secrecy or deference a man tries to hide his change of feelings, can there be anything that the eye of passion is unable to penetrate? And, from the moment when the veil is torn, every precaution that he thinks he is taking to ensure his tranquillity is a proof and an insult. In spite of this I am not unjust, and I should not be surprised if M. de Francueil, at certain times, thought that he ought to be satisfied with his conduct towards me." "How can you mean that? for he deceives you." "That is a wrong which men, as a rule, regard with indifference. But when passion drags them away in spite of themselves, they show us the false and humiliating compassion of believing that they have done all they can, if, by dint of falsehoods and lies, they have succeeded in throwing us into a state of uncertainty which the discovery of the truth alone can dissipate. But let us have done with these idle reflections. You must feel how important it is to me to know exactly the details of all this. In the first place, my dear friend, is it quite certain that you do not love Francueil at all?" "Quite certain. Nothing can be more certain. I make no merit of renouncing him, I swear to you. But if it would be a sacrifice, it would be only right that I should make it, and I should certainly do so. You do not know me, Madame d'Épinay, if you have any doubt about it. I am no longer surprised," she continued, smiling,

"that I found you so odd." "Then," I said to her, "I may ask you to give me an exact account of all that he says to you in future, of his behaviour towards you, and of your behaviour towards him?" "That I promise you. You have only to prescribe to me my course of conduct; but he must never be allowed to suspect——" "You may count upon that." "You quite see that I should have the appearance of deceiving him unpardonably." "Of course." "If, however, I had loved him, what would you have done?" "I am afraid to tell you," I replied frankly. "What!" she exclaimed with an air of affright, at which I could not help laughing, "would you have killed me? You terrify me." "No, no. I am not so wicked as that, but I might very likely have sacrificed you to my own interests." "And who will guarantee that you will not even now compromise me, if it seems necessary to you?" "I give you my word of honour. But, may I ask you some questions? And do you promise to conceal nothing from me?" "That depends. There are a thousand things which I would have told you, and which, perhaps, I will not tell you now; not because I want to conceal them from you, but because I am afraid that you may disapprove of them. Considering your position, one must not expect indulgence. Perhaps, however, I will tell all. I know nothing about it. I do not even know myself whether I have anything to say or to conceal."

"What a cruel thing is consideration for others!

how offensive it is!" I cried. "Know, Madame, that my head is strong enough, and my soul proud enough to endure the bitterest truth told me frankly by my friend, and with confidence by my lover." "Excuse me, my dear friend," said Madame de Versel, "you may reckon upon the strictest accuracy." "I wanted to ask you," I said, "how long Francueil has been in love with you, when he told you of it, and the state of your relations." "For the last ten or twelve days he has said nothing more to me about it. Yesterday, when he left, he gave me a letter, in which he swears that he loves me no longer, but from which it is evident that he still adores me. Well? you seem unable to bear it. I will say no more."

In reality, I felt ready to choke. I made a violent effort to control myself. "Continue," I said to her; "have you got that letter?" "No; I burned it immediately." "And what answer did you make?" "None; I never answer, or very rarely. I told him that I was delighted that he no longer loved me, and—however, that was not quite true." "What?" "I did all I could to bring myself to love him, hoping that he might perhaps at last drive W*** from my heart, and that, if my mother came to notice it, she would be reassured; but I now abandon this idea for ever. I have given you my word, and you can rely upon it." "And what did he say to your answer?" "That I should be satisfied; that he certainly loved me no longer, or that at least he

would not love me long." "And has he loved you long?" "It was a little before the visit that he spoke to me of it for the first time. He then declared that he had been doing his utmost for three months to destroy this passion, and that it must certainly have been beyond his power, for him to have decided to speak to me about it." "And you listened to him then?" "That is true; and for the same reason that I have told you. I gave him no hopes, but neither did I repulse him; I sought to study him. I continually said to myself that I might be able to love him; I even believe that I persuaded myself that he was more amiable than W***. It was I who thought of the visit to the sea, to get away from the one and to be near the other, and, above all, to avoid my mother, who grieved me terribly." "Well?" "At first he refused to come; I pressed him——" "And he accepted," I said, interrupting her. "It is quite harmless." "He is really not so much to blame as I thought him to be; how could he have resisted? Ah! you have certainly something to reproach yourself with." "I? did I know that he loved you, and that you loved him? How could I suspect it?" "What! you had not heard it said?" "Excuse me, yes, before I knew you both; but when I saw that your ways of living were so different—you, in almost complete solitude, which he did not seem in a hurry to share; your husband, making a show of gallantry when he was with you, and having far more constant visitors than Francueil in your household

—I came to look upon the ill-natured reports which I had heard as destitute of foundation, and I was confirmed in this opinion by his behaviour to me." "Yes; he drew so nice a portrait of me for your benefit, that really it was difficult——" "Ah! he has never said anything but good; he has always spoken of you with esteem and affection, and as one whose least trouble would drive him to despair. You condemn my conduct; nothing is so easy to say. I should like to know what you would have done in my place." "I should not have deceived him, for it is evident that he was led on by the hopes which you raised in him." "Hopes? Why, I gave him none. It is not my fault if he himself made the mistake of hoping." "My dear friend, those are the words of a frank coquette; you stole the other from Madame de Jully, but he does not suit you. Come, come, confess honestly that you are wrong, and let us have done with the matter." "But really, Madame d'Épinay, I do not feel it; come——" "Let us finish, let us finish." "You frighten me in spite of myself; I cannot tell you anything more if you scold me." "Speak, speak, my dear friend," I said, embracing her; "I will not scold you any more."

"Well, then, we set out," continued Madame de Versel. "The first day he was melancholy and thoughtful. We rebuked him for it, and the rest of the time he was gay, full of care and attention for me, and pressed me to respond to his feelings." "He was gay, and did not see me devoured by grief

and chagrin!" "He frequently conversed in private with Madame de Jully. I could not understand these frequent conversations at all, which always left him more serious than before. But this impression did not last long; I see now that you were the subject of them. At last, your arrival was the time when he showed his whims to me. I complained of it—not that I thought of attributing it to you, but I firmly believed that it was a mere matter of disposition. He told me that he clearly saw that he could not win my approval, that he was no further advanced than the first day, and he urged me to tell him frankly what he might hope. 'Nothing,' I answered bluntly, for his behaviour appeared to me odd and ridiculous. For the next two days he seemed to take no notice of me; but I saw quite plainly that he was not sorry that his melancholy did not escape me. It was not until the last day of our return that he showed himself amiable again; but his caprices and inconsistencies have not ceased since then. At one time he swears that he adores me, that he will die if I refuse to listen to him; at other times he says that he loves me no longer. Now I understand the reason of all these whims, and I believe that this time he has seriously given me up, for he has informed me that he intends to avoid me as carefully as he once sought my company." "It is certain," I said to her, "that he has no other means of forgetting you. You must encourage him to follow out this plan, and help him, so that social arrangements may not disturb

its execution." "Have no doubt about that, my dear friend. But what are *you* going to do?" "I do not know yet. I must think it over." "Do you know what will be the result of all this? You will love me no longer, and Francueil will hate me, because you will perhaps quarrel with him." "I! quarrel with Francueil! No; never, never! that is impossible. And why should I love you no longer? On the contrary, my dear friend," I said, embracing her, "I swear to you that you are dearer to me than you were. Is it because of your frankness? Is it because Francueil loves you? I do not know; but the fact is that I feel much more sympathy and even affection for you than I felt before our explanation. But let us part now. I need rest. Perhaps I want to be alone, to set my feelings in order. I do not know what I am doing, whether I am awake or dreaming. I am also abusing your kindness." "Mine?" said Madame de Versel, "not at all. I could spend the night like this, if you desired it; but I can understand that you must want rest. Adieu, my dear friend, till to-morrow; then we shall meet again."

CHAPTER VIII (1751).

Continuation of the Diary.

It is true, then, that I have no longer anything to love in the world. Lovers, friends—all have abandoned me. I do not even hear anything of Madame de Jully; and yet she knows that I am in trouble. My mother, my good mother, is the only one from whom I receive consolation. Alarmed at the vast change which she saw in me, of the reason of which she was ignorant, she came up to see me to-day. "My child," she said to me, "there is nothing in the world for which there is not a remedy; it only needs confidence and courage to overcome all difficulties. Speak to me; open your heart to your mother. Perhaps you have lost a friend; you have three around you, who stretch out their arms to you—me and your children.

"These friends will not deceive you; give yourself up freely to all the consolations which we offer you. One only needs to have lived to know how unjust and ungrateful men are, and how little they heed the sufferings of others, when they are caused by their own selfish interests. Of whom have you to complain? of your husband? of Mademoiselle d'Ette? of Madame de Jully? of

M. de Francueil?" "Of everybody, mamma," I said to her; "it wounds my heart to see that one only has friends so far as pleasure and gaiety call them. I see only too well that my heart is not made to form attachments to such frivolous friends. It requires a purer, a more solid blessing. I believe that God has opened my eyes, and that He summons me to Him. You have often spoken to me of the emptiness of the consolations which I sought; I did not believe you then." "My daughter, the disgust which you feel to-day is the least misfortune that could happen to you. I could have wished rather to get you to recognise how little esteem we ought to have for men. Perfect happiness cannot exist without a real love of God. There can be no perfect repose except in a life of piety and retirement: confide to Him the trouble of your soul. See the Abbé Martin. I am sure you will find great consolation in his words." "Mamma," I said, "order your daughter to do whatever you think fit; she is ready to obey."

She wrote to the Abbé Martin, who is her spiritual adviser, and asked him to dine with us. He came the next day, and when I went down to my mother's room, he was already there.

I was in hopes that she would have given him a hint, but I have reason to believe that she had not done so. When I went in, she told him that I wished him to be kind enough to give me some rules for my guidance, as I had made up my mind to devote serious attention to my salvation. "That is the wish of every good

Christian," he replied. "The duties of your age and position, Madame, are not so difficult or painful to fulfil as is generally supposed." My mother left us alone. I felt slightly embarrassed. "It is neither my age nor my position that need to be considered, Monsieur," I said; "I am disgusted with the world. All that I see, all that I experience in it, convinces me daily more and more that it is impossible to find salvation in it. If I dared, if my children could do without me, I would bury myself in a convent, and would gladly take a vow never to leave it." "I confess, Madame," said he, "that I attach little importance to these extreme measures, and that, speaking generally, I have no confidence in these premature conversions: their effects never last long, and the feeling of regret is always painful. True devotion, Madame, and the condition of the soul most agreeable to God, both in morals and philosophy, consist in making the most of the state of life in which Providence has placed us. A married woman and the mother of a family is not meant either to be a Carmelite, or to live as a Carmelite. When a woman, from caprice or simple disgust with the world, allows herself to be carried away to these sudden conversions, at your age she soon repents of them, and returns to the world from the need she feels of entering it again." "Monsieur, I assure you that it is impossible to find salvation in the world." "How so, Madame? Do you condemn to eternal damnation all those who are kept in it by their position in life? God

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demands nothing from us but the strict observance of the duties imposed upon us by the situation in which He has placed us. Before doing more than He requires, begin by doing exactly what He does require, otherwise you would proclaim more than you can perform. You will return to the world, you will leave it again for God, and you will stand well with neither. When one adopts an extreme course out of spite, when one attempts to lead the life of a recluse, not from love of God, but from disgust with one's fellows, the only result is that the hope of a real reconciliation between the Creator and the creature is weakened; this often even leads to the complete extinction of religion in a soul to which it hardly any longer offers the resource of expiation." "I assure you, Monsieur, that my return to God is sincere; it will, I hope, be lasting; I have so many reasons to make it so." "I see, Madame, that you are going to make God a last resource. If we despise the world when we abandon it for God, we can say equally that we despise God when we abandon Him for the world: and this is what would not fail to happen in your case. Do you think, Madame, that that is the frame of mind which He expects from you? Do you think, when you have left off using rouge, when you have replaced the Essays of Montaigne by those of Nicole,[1] when you have shut your door against the world of fashion, that there will be no further

[1] A theologian and moralist (1625-1695), author of "Essais de Morale."

danger for you? You are mistaken. Temptations will seek you out at the foot of the altar. Devotion consists chiefly in depriving oneself of things that are very pleasant, and this privation hardly ever fails to sour the temper."

I told him that I had proved myself in this respect, and I told him of all the sorrow that my husband had caused me. "You have to complain of your husband?" he said: "you will have a thousand times less indulgence for his freaks if you abandon yourself to an excessive devotion. This should not be, but it will be so, for the sole reason that you will no longer believe you have any fault to pardon in yourself."

We discussed at length my relations with my husband. He said some very sensible things to me, which would certainly have consoled me if this had been the real cause of my grief: he suspected that I was not telling him all, but I did not venture to tell him more. After a moment's silence, during which my demeanour did not satisfy him, he suddenly said to me with an air of compassion: "Madame, I am surprised that your soul does not find some slight consolation in agreeing to all that I have had the honour to say to you: you are sad: may I venture to ask you what is the cause of your sadness?"

I told him at first that I was tired of living with vicious and untrustworthy people, and that often those, in whom we think we are bound to place most confidence, are the most treacherous and the least indulgent. "But," said he to me,

"the perfidy, inconsistency, and intolerance of mankind are as old as the world: one ought to be used to it. Once again, in this there is hardly the motive which God makes use of to recall a soul to Him. The treachery of friends inspires distrust rather than devotion. It causes us to hate the human species a little more: but do you think, Madame, that we can love God the more for it?"

My heart was seized with anguish, and my tears, which I was unable to restrain, flowed abundantly. I hid my face in my hands: I tried to speak: it was impossible. M. Martin pitied my condition, and assured me that, if I had any secret troubles in which he could give me consolation, he was not unworthy of my confidence, and that I need not be afraid to speak. I confessed to him that the sole cause of the excessive disgust which I felt for the world was the loss of the affection of a friend to whom I had sacrificed everything: I pictured to him the desolation of my soul, the despair which from time to time took possession of me, and, finally, the insupportable weariness which my very existence caused me.

"Madame," he said to me, "I am no longer astonished at your plans of reform, but I have less confidence than ever in their durability. Your case is that of all honourable and unhappy wives, who still feel the need of loving. God becomes the object of a sensibility which cannot remain idle, and the ill-success of a resolution so lightly taken is a just punishment of the frivolous motives

which have led to this act of profanity. Meanwhile, the pretended conversion makes a great stir, the reason for it becomes more manifest. Such a reform is a kind of scandal which one causes without any good result; for one soon returns to the world, and then there is a second scandal, and an appearance of absurdity which can only be avoided by the exercise of caution and infinite skill. If you were to follow the lively impulse of your ideas, the only result of all this would be the embarrassment caused by gradually recalling all the vanities you might have kept at a distance; it is then, Madame, that you would be able to appreciate the infinite gulf that separates God from the world. For a woman like yourself, Madame, who are upright, sensible, and honourable, there can be no other course but to adhere to that which you have already adopted. Can you make sure of cutting yourself asunder so completely from the numerous advantages of your position as never to feel tempted to enjoy them? or will you make up your mind to lead a life of hypocrisy which can never suit you? The confession which you have made does not affect anything that we have said. My advice still is, Madame, that you should make no display, that you should endeavour to calm the violent and contradictory emotions which despair arouses in you by innocent recreations. If you wish your repentance for your errors to be agreeable to God, it must first of all be sincere; and we shall only be able to form a sound judgment of your state

of mind when you are calm. At present, I will not even permit you to receive the sacrament; I find more spite than remorse in your expressions. Devote yourself at first, Madame, to the actual duties of your position. Sketch out a new plan of life for yourself—the care of your mother, the education of your children, an unceasing watchfulness over your husband's interests. This, Madame, must be the commencement of your reformation; and then, if, after a few years, you still persist in the desire of attaining the perfection of a devout life, I shall have the honour of speaking to you again."

So, then, the Abbé Martin thinks that I possess none of the qualities necessary for becoming a happy devotee. My desire for this had supported me, and now that I have lost it, I feel more wretched than ever. I asked him what he advised me to do, in case M. de Francueil came to see me in the country. "I feel," I said to him, "that I ought not to see him any more." "Madame," he replied, "it is neither prudent nor honourable to behave in this manner. The person in question is apparently the very person to be your friend, since he has been acknowledged as such by all your family. In such a case, an open rupture is a folly, and a discreditable folly. Wait until he comes; it seems that he is not very eager to find you; if he comes, you must receive him, and receive him with a welcome. You must not allow any explanation on any excuse whatever, nor remain alone with him. Keep him at a distance

without seeming to do so, that will be the best thing to do; but as long as you are obliged to see him, treat him like your other friends, without making any distinction."

Continuation of the Diary.

The Abbé Martin was only too correct; I was ill-inclined for devoutness. Ah! how weak I am! I adore Francueil; I am more overwhelmed than ever. How glad I am that I confessed nothing to my mother! He has sent me, by messenger, a very affectionate letter, in which he asks me to give him my commands.

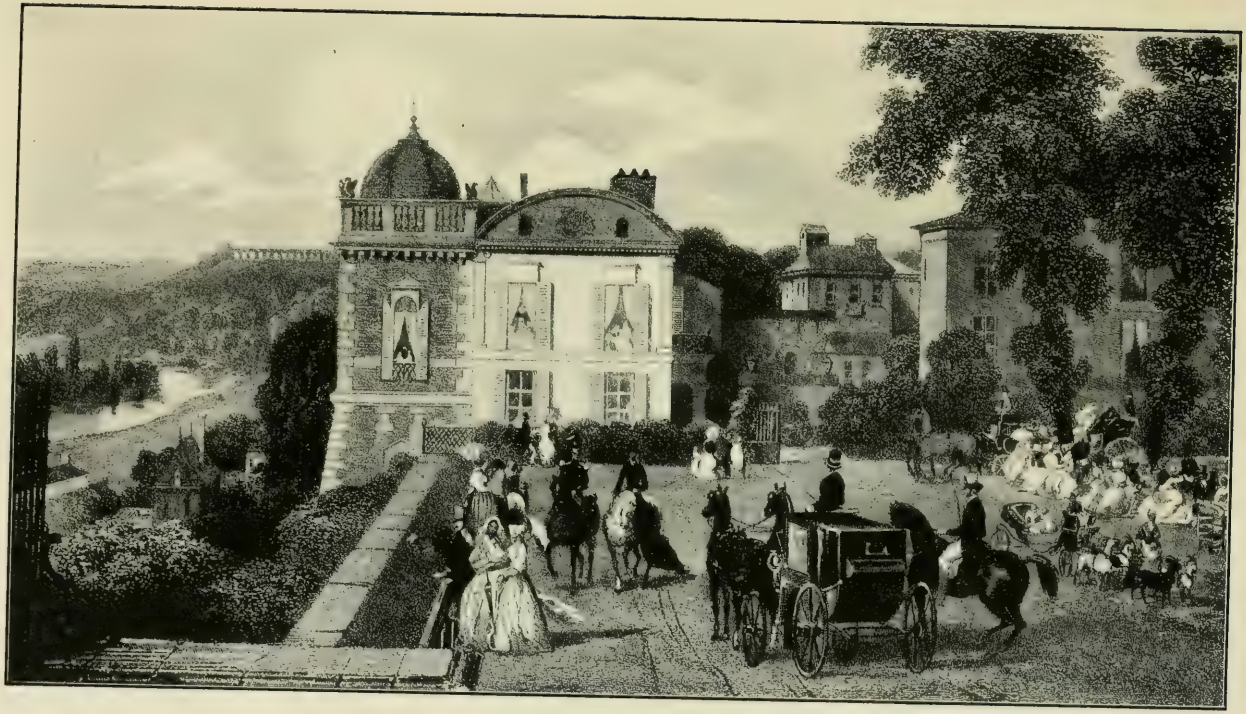
He wanted to take up his quarters at Épinay. He was to have been there already with M. Rousseau and Gauffecourt: but having learnt that M. and Madame de Jully were going to dine there to-day with Duclos, they have put off their arrival until to-morrow.

Continuation.

It is difficult to describe my sufferings during the first days of Francueil's and Rousseau's visit. At last, Francueil seemed a little more at his ease with me; but we were not alone for a moment, and I did not observe that he made any effort to speak to me in private. M. Rousseau seems to me to be greatly attached to him; and I am convinced that he already knows all about our relations. They used to take long walks every afternoon, and were not

St. Germain

Engraved by R. Staines after picture by Eugene Lami



seen until supper. However suited to the condition of my feelings this conduct on Francueil's part may be, I have not yet been able to accustom myself to the idea of seeing him avoid me in this manner.

It is inconceivable that M. d'Épinay, with an utter want of respect for his family and myself, should have bought a little house in the village, on which he has laid out money most extravagantly, and established in it, under fictitious names, two actresses, whom he has had the audacity to introduce to the *curé* as respectable women.

Duclos has just written to me to inform me, from Mademoiselle Quinault, that she has decided to leave Paris. She leaves at the end of this week to go and live at Saint-Germain, where she has bought a house, with two acres of land. She intends to retire there, live economically, and be happy; I hope she may be. But it seems to me that a person, accustomed to the life she has led, will find herself very lonely at Saint-Germain. Duclos replies to this: "Why should she? There are excellent figs there; I am very fond of them. I shall often go and see her." For my own part, I would wager that her only reason for leaving Paris is, to escape from the authority which he has acquired over her, and from which she has not courage to free herself. Whatever may be the reason, she is giving a farewell dinner the day after to-morrow, to which I have been invited and shall certainly go.

I have just come from Mademoiselle Quinault's; it was a funny assortment of people that she had gathered together. I think that they must all have agreed amongst themselves to be alternately sublime and ridiculous. The dinner was a farewell dinner. As a rule, all those who have been once admitted to her table have the right of entry without further invitation, so that we ran the risk of finding ourselves fifteen or twenty in number, although the original number was only eight.

Duclos sets the tone, because there are few lungs capable of disputing it with his. Each guest has his nickname, bestowed upon him, as a rule, in a spirit of criticism or pretentiousness, not of sentiment or gaiety. Duclos is the "tender Arbassan"; everybody laughs when he is called so. As I was quite unable to understand the humour of this name, which I had heard repeated, and always with applause, whenever I visited Mademoiselle Quinault, I asked for an explanation of it, and was greatly astonished to find that nobody knew any more about it than myself, and that this expression, which had been laughed at for two years on the authority of the lady of the house, had been dictated by chance. My embarrassment and the anxiety I displayed to get to the bottom of this joke appeared very ludicrous to her. I was bantered upon my perseverance in waiting so long before asking for this explanation. "We must call her Griselidis,"[1] cried Mademoiselle Quinault,

[1] Griselidis, or Griselda, Marquise de Saluces, lived in the 11th century. She was the heroine of a number of legends, which represented her as the pattern of all conjugal virtues.

gesticulating violently and laughing loudly. Everybody applauded. The tender Arbassan was more serious, and by certain gestures of approval caused it to be understood that the word had a deeper meaning than was imagined, and that it would be long before a happier one could be found. The rest believed him, and I was nicknamed Madame Griselidis.

Mademoiselle Quinault whispered to me that one of her friends, who was an author, was going to recite, after dinner, a society trifle upon which he desired to have the opinion of the company; that she had been very pleased to admit me to the reading, but that it was necessary to keep it a secret, because the crowd would be allowed to leave before it commenced. She forgot that she had just asked me to excuse her bad dinner, for which she said that the only thing she claimed was, that she had only invited her true friends to eat it, because one ought not to steal away without saying good-bye. Then she began to sing:

> "Nous quitterons-nous sans boire?
> Nous quitterons-nous
> Sans boire un coup?"

After this happy outburst, she paid me a little compliment by expressing her wish to have my opinion upon the piece which was to be read, and, on the way, she dictated to me beforehand the favourable verdict which I was expected to pass upon it. I was inwardly amused at all that I saw, and I pretended, like everybody else, to applaud everything she said.

When I arrived, the only persons present were Duclos, Rousseau, and two gentlemen whom I do not know. "One of these two gentlemen," said Mademoiselle Quinault to me, "makes a business of going about reciting the pieces which Voltaire has not yet sent to press. He really believes that he has gained some credit by this employment. People of this sort keep us informed of minor literary information; and this is not without its use. The other is an Abbé, a great eater, a great bawler, and always welcome at the house of certain duchesses who are said to admire certain talents, which he possesses in an eminent degree. He has always been friendly to me. I was obliged to invite him." I thanked her for her information, when I saw a man come in, whose demeanour was simpler and humbler than that of the rest. "The author!" Mademoiselle Quinault whispered to me. I examined him attentively. He seems to possess more intelligence than the present company is inclined to allow him, where he is patronised rather than done justice to. Next arrived a physician, no bad resemblance of Molière's caricatures. Mademoiselle Quinault consulted him with an air of confidence, which did not prevent her from laughing openly at his answers. At first I felt uneasy on his account, but I saw that I might save myself the trouble. He is the personification of pedantry, medical pretentiousness, and absurdity. We were only waiting for the Marquis de Saint-Lambert, who at length arrived. On that day, the magnificent Gobelin tapestries, which are for

sale in consequence of the death of the Duc de ***, were on exhibition at the Grands-Augustins.[1] Mademoiselle Quinault cried: "I wager that he has just seen the tapestries." "You think you are joking," replied Saint-Lambert, "but you have spoken the truth. I was there two hours, and found it difficult to tear myself away. Is it not astonishing how, with bits of wool painted all kinds of colours, they have succeeded in representing an immense picture, and that in such perfection that, from a certain distance, one does not know whether what one sees is a piece of stuff, a picture, or even nature: so admirably the design, colour, perspective, the magic effect of the *chiaroscuro*, in short, all the art of Vanloo,[2] have been observed."

Each gave his opinion upon the degree of perfection to which the manufactories of France had attained. Some preferred Beauvais to the Gobelins, others the Savonnerie; everybody was talking at once, when we sat down to table. Rousseau attempted to venture some remarks, but they were neither taken up nor listened to. It seems to me that one of them well deserved it. He said that, since painting, tapestry-work, etc., were a kind of imitation, he thought it absurd to represent on tapestry persons whose feet rested upon the wainscot. "All very well," he said, "some little figures in the background of a landscape; the perspective, being carefully observed, may attract me and cause illusion." "What!"

[1] The convent of that name.

[2] A celebrated painter (1705-1765).

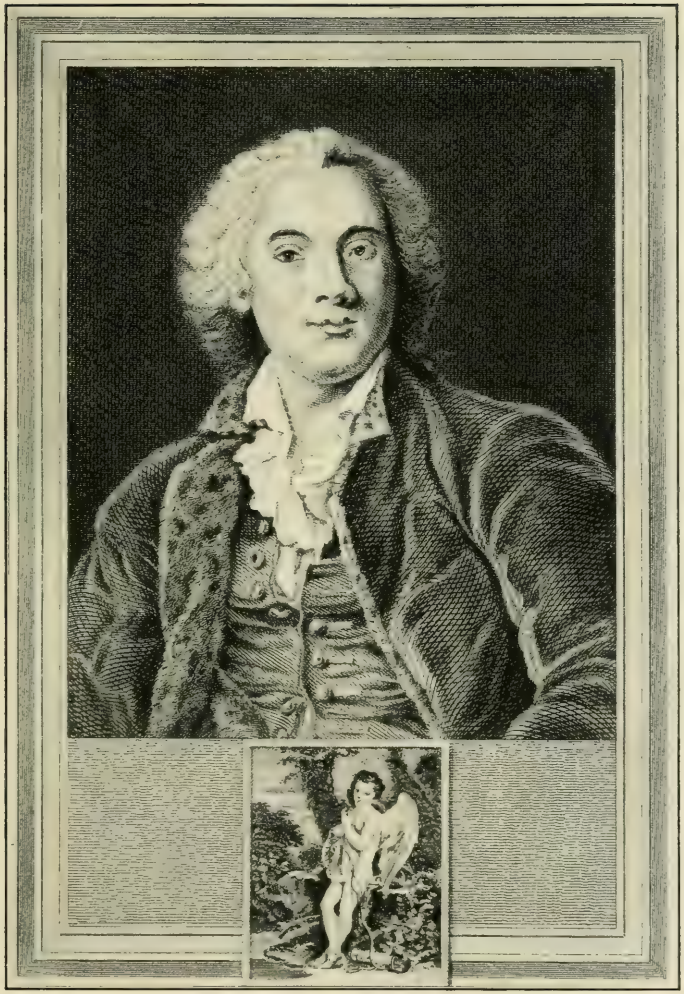
I interrupted, "you will not even pardon Poussin for having represented the flood in a space four feet square?" "He is the very man who drives me to despair, and that was the first picture that caused me to make that observation." "It was the first which ought to have made you forget it," I answered.

As soon as we were seated, the physician, who was called Doctor Akakia,[1] remained, with folded arms, looking at Mademoiselle Quinault, until she had commenced her soup; then, catching her in the act, he exclaimed, in an indignant voice: "And the fifteen grains of rhubarb, Mademoiselle?" Everybody burst out laughing. "They are packed up, doctor," she said, "and are waiting for me at Saint-Germain." He tried to prove to her that this interruption would be prejudicial to her, and he assured us, with the greatest confidence in the world, that it is better to try useless and even antipathetic remedies than none at all. We bantered him so severely and continuously that at last he perceived it. "Messieurs," said he, "I forgive, with all my heart, all satire directed against myself, but is it possible that people of intelligence, such as you are, can allow themselves to be drawn into a lively and bitter attack upon the first of all the arts? All great men, Messieurs, have always respected medicine." "That is true," answered Rousseau; "witness Molière." "Monsieur," rejoined the doctor, "consider also how he died."

[1] His real name is supposed to be Malouin. In 1753 Voltaire published the *Diatribe contre Maupertuis*, under the name of Docteur Akakia.

Carlo Vanloo

From an engraving of the portrait by Pierre le Sieur



After jokes on various subjects, the conversation returned to the Duc de ***'s tapestries. Mademoiselle Quinault said that it was a terrible thing for a family to be obliged to sell such valuable pieces of work; such was the destiny of all beautiful things, of rare collections. "Hush!" said Duclos, "do not disgust the amateurs. Some farmers-general will buy these tapestries, and will display them to us pompously before their door on the day of the little Fête-Dieu."[1] We lingered for a moment upon the beauty and solemnity of the ceremonies of that day. Mademoiselle Quinault said to Saint-Lambert: "I wager, Marquis, that you are madly fond of the processions of the little Fête-Dieu." He exclaimed with enthusiasm: "I assure you, Madame, that I find them wonderfully pathetic. The men, the women, the children, so full of devotion; the torches, the priests in their magnificent vestments; the silence broken at intervals moves and touches me; I shed tears, and feel as devout as an angel."

The Abbé exclaimed: "By Heaven! Monsieur, your rendering is so striking that I can hardly keep from striking up the *Tantum ergo*."[2]

In the midst of the noise and shouts of laughter, Duclos, with a voice of thunder, succeeded in making himself heard. "You are right," said he to the Marquis; "and those who have banished from the rites of religion the pomp of outward ceremonies have done a hundred

[1] Corpus Christi day, one of the most brilliant festivals of the Catholic Church.

[2] From the hymn sung at Vespers on Corpus Christi day.

times worse than the philosophers." "They were afraid," said Rousseau, "of the people falling into idolatry, and, in their alarm lest they should have a bad religion, they have done everything possible to prevent their having any at all."

"And it is this august ceremonial," modestly observed the author, "that caused paganism to last so long."

"Ah!" rejoined Mademoiselle Quinault, "how beautiful those festivals were, Marquis!"

"How delightful, Mademoiselle," said Saint-Lambert, "for the people who beheld them! What material for a poet! A crowd of Gods—all these Gods wrought by the hand of Apelles, Praxiteles, etc. etc."

They passed in review all the Gods and their attributes, and all the artists, vying with one another in the warmth and vigour of description. One spoke of Jupiter, holding the thunderbolt in his hand and threatening the head of the impious; another saw him with his august head, his hair waving over his forehead, his dark brows, the mere motion of which shakes Olympus; and then, Neptune, Thetis, and Apollo. I was greatly distressed at not being able to hear and remember everything. What I noticed was, that this ebullition of spirits was ended by the Abbé, who spoilt the picture, by awkwardly invoking Venus with the well-shaped neck and voluptuous smile.

The conversation was again interrupted; but Saint-Lambert, who was somewhat elevated, returned to it again. The comparison which he

drew between our worship and paganism shocked me. "You see, however," I said to him, "that this religion produces great effects, since philosophers themselves are moved at the sight of a multitude on its knees."

"That is true," he said; "but it is not easy to comprehend."

"What does this people do with its reason?" said Duclos; "it laughs at the other peoples of the earth, and is even more credulous than they."

"As for its credulity, I pardon it," replied Rousseau; "but I cannot forgive it for condemning those who are credulous in another way than itself."

Mademoiselle Quinault said that, as far as religion was concerned, everybody was right; but that all ought to remain faithful to that in which they had been born.

"No, by Heaven!" rejoined Rousseau, with warmth; "not if it is bad; for in that case it must do great harm."[1]

I took it into my head to say that religion often did much good as well, that it was a check upon the lower orders, who had no other ideas of morality. Everybody cried out at once, and overwhelmed me with arguments which really seemed more weighty than my own. One said that the lower orders were more afraid of being hanged than damned. Saint-Lambert added that it was the business of the civil and criminal code to regulate manners and morals, not that of religion,

[1] Rousseau himself had abjured Protestantism in 1728.

which did well to restore a crown at Easter to its servant, but which had never caused the restoration of ill-gotten millions or a usurped province, or the reparation of a slander.

Saint-Lambert was going on. "One moment," said Mademoiselle Quinault. "We are here for the purpose of nourishing and giving substance to this rag which is called body. Duclos, ring, and let us have the roast meat."

Dinner was brought in. When the servants had retired, and the door was shut, Saint-Lambert and Duclos exerted themselves so violently that I was afraid they would destroy all religion, and I asked grace for natural religion. "It deserves it no more than the rest," said Saint-Lambert to me. Rousseau replied that he did not go so far as that; that he agreed with Horace, *ego sum paulo infirmior.*[1] The morality of the Gospel is the only thing which it preserves from Christianity, because it was natural morality which in ancient times constituted the whole of religion. Saint-Lambert at first argued the point with him a little, and then, leaving aside the question of natural morality, he said: "What is a God, whose wrath is excited and appeased?" "But tell us, Marquis," said Mademoiselle Quinault, "can it be that you are an atheist?"

At his answer Rousseau became angry, and muttered something which made the company laugh at him. "If," said he, "it is cowardice to allow anyone to speak ill of an absent friend, it is

[1] "Satires," I. ix. 70.

a crime to allow anyone to speak ill of his God, who is present; and I believe in God, Messieurs."

"Pascal also believed in God," I rejoined, then, turning to Saint-Lambert, I said: "You, Monsieur, who are a poet, will agree with me that the existence of an eternal being, all powerful and supremely intelligent, is the germ of the most beautiful enthusiasm."

"I confess," he answered, "that it is beautiful to see this God inclining his face towards earth and regarding with admiration the behaviour of Cato. This idea, Madame, like many others, is very useful in the case of some great brains, such as Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Socrates, etc. In them it can only produce heroism; but it is the germ of all the follies——"

"Messieurs," cried Rousseau, "if you say a word more, I shall leave the room."

In fact, he had left his seat, and was seriously meditating flight, when the Prince de *** was announced. "Ah! here he is, here he is," cried Mademoiselle Quinault; "it is the beautiful Prince; it is he. Let us make room for him. He looks like a beautiful Philistine; he is as beautiful as the antique." Then, half rising again, leaning with her two hands upon the table, her elbows in the air, and her head bent over her plate, she said, with an air of the profoundest respect: "My Prince, I am your most humble servant. Here is Madame d'Épinay who has been good enough to do us the honour of helping us to eat our stew. Take your seat then.

La Fleur! Jeanneton! What hateful creatures they are!"

The Prince saluted us, and we could not help laughing mutually at this introduction. He declared that he would not take anything, and dessert was brought in. He was accompanied by an officer of his regiment, who has an especial talent for reading, reciting, and singing vulgar stories and ditties; as he had a collection of pieces of this kind in his pocket, he read some of them, with appropriate tone, gesture, and attitude; it was really very amusing. But the contrast between this tone and all that had just been said struck me forcibly, and I believe prevented me from enjoying these broad jokes as I might have done at another time. However, the man's talent and his collection were highly praised. Duclos said that it was sublime of its kind, and gave him the name of the Corneille of the gutter, with which praise he appeared delighted. After this, an insipid discussion upon pleasure and happiness was started, which led to the utterance of mere commonplaces, which at least kept the bystanders very far from the real object of the discussion. Duclos was the first to show impatience: "Messieurs," said he, "it is absurd to argue about a thing which is at everybody's disposal. We are happy when we wish, or when we are able to be so. I do not see——" "Speak for yourself, who only need, in order to be happy, a piece of bread and cheese, and the first woman you meet," answered Mademoiselle Quinault.

After shouts of laughter and some tolerably free conversation, we left the table and returned to the drawing-room. We paired off: I found myself sitting near Rousseau; we were both thoughtful. "What is the matter with you?" he said to me. "I am sorry to think," I replied, "that Saint-Lambert, one of the best informed and most honourable of men, does not believe in God. I confess that I am greatly surprised at it; I had imagined that such views were more suited to Duclos than to him." "I cannot endure this mania for pulling down without building up," replied Rousseau. "However, Monsieur, it must be admitted that he argues very plausibly in support of his opinion." "What! can you agree with him? Take care not to tell me so, Madame, for I should not be able to prevent myself from hating you. Besides, the idea of a God is necessary to happiness; and I want you to be happy."

Here we were interrupted; but I intend to approach him again on this subject in the country, and to make him explain it clearly, if he can; for it seems to me that he has fallen into some inconsistencies; or, perhaps, he is not so far from the Marquis's belief as he asserts.

Duclos, Rousseau, the Prince, and the Marquis left; and Mademoiselle Quinault then proposed that the piece should be read. There was no one but the Abbé, Voltaire's book-hawker, the old officer, the author, and myself. "Come, now!" she said, "we are alone; let us read." The author

was a little annoyed at only having for an audience persons whom he did not know, and whose opinion was a matter of indifference to him, while he really wanted the approbation of those who had just left the room. He entered into a whispered explanation with Mademoiselle Quinault, who, probably having no good reason to give for this caprice, became angry and said to him: "That is just like you; you are never tired of dinning into my ears, 'Secrecy, secrecy!' Do I know or not whom it pleases you to except? Come, read, read all the same; we shall soon find the others again, and I can answer to you for these." The reading went off almost exactly as I had anticipated; the greatest efforts were made to dictate our verdict to us. I very impolitely persisted in silence at all the weak passages, but I noted, without any enthusiasm, those which pleased me. The Abbé laughed to order; and, as he had dined freely, he fell asleep laughing. On the whole, the piece amused me. I shall dream of this day for a long time.

Continuation of the Diary.

The day before yesterday, I spent the evening at Madame de La Poplinière's, whose acquaintance I had made at the house of Francueil's father. We were only a small party; Francueil, Rousseau, a stranger and friend of the latter, named Grimm, of whom I had often heard him speak, and Desmahis, a young man of letters, the

author of a little comedy which has been very successful. He lives at Madame de La Poplinière's house; according to what I have been told, his family resides in the province in which Madame de La Poplinière's estates are situated. These composed all the party. The conversation was not very lively. The most interesting subject of discussion was French and Italian music. However, I listened to M. Grimm with pleasure. Rousseau and Francueil introduced him to me as a man who desired to make my acquaintance; he is not very fluent; nevertheless, his manner of expressing himself is neither unpleasant nor uninteresting. Rousseau had spoken of him to me with an enthusiasm which made me examine him with greater curiosity than I usually show in society. I invited him to come and see Rousseau and Francueil, when they are at Épinay; he answered me politely, but I doubt whether he will take advantage of my invitation, for it is said that he is not fond of the country.

M. and Madame de La Poplinière must possess some very essential and estimable qualities, for I find that all their friends are of long standing; and Rousseau, who has but little affection for anyone, and who made their acquaintance three years ago, during a visit with Grimm at Francueil's father's country-house, has, like the latter, preserved the most flattering recollection of them. They are only at Paris for the winter; I am sorry for it.

Continuation of the Diary.

Épinay.

We arrived this morning—Francueil, Rousseau, and myself. It gave me the greatest pleasure to see my mother and children again. Young as my daughter is, she seems to me to have a decided character; but I believe that she will not be wanting in sensitiveness. My son, on the contrary, will be weak and easily led; and, if I am to believe M. Linant, he already has every fault imaginable. I myself think that Linant's pedantry wearies him. Francueil has promised me that he will give him lessons in music and drawing, during the three weeks we are going to spend in the country.

I have been told that Jelyotte complains bitterly of Madame de Jully's coquetry; she makes him quite unhappy; and he declares he is more in love with her than ever. I can well believe that she no longer cares for him, for she has neglected me terribly.

I have just had a curious conversation with Rousseau, which is really worth being preserved. It concluded with a story which he composed on the spot, and which I thought so admirable, that I begged him to write it down.

While Francueil was busy with my son, I went for a walk with Rousseau. "What is the reason," I said to him, "that I have not seen you at my

house for an age, or during my stay at Paris?" "Because, when I want to see you, Madame, I want to see no one but yourself." "What?" "Certainly! What would you have me do in the midst of your society? I should cut a sorry figure in a circle of little coxcombs, walking tip-toe in their Sunday best; that doesn't suit me at all." "What nonsense! When did you see any coxcombs at my house?" "Eh! most certainly I have seen them, Madame. Without going further, your step-sister, with the languishing eye and the voluptuously disdainful smile; a Maurepaire, full of banter; a Madame de Versel, who does obeisance after the style of a devotee, in order to show her beautiful throat; a Duclos, despotic, biting, and treacherously rude; a Jelyotte, sweet as honey and consequential. In fact, all full of politeness, but without morals." "You are very severe, but you are still more unjust, Monsieur. If you were to take the liberty of judging me, I should consider it quite natural; you have known me for several years, you have seen me in the country, where the extreme liberty which I have established there takes the place of a long-standing acquaintanceship; but with the exception of Duclos, you have hardly ever seen these ladies and gentlemen whom you have just mentioned." "I only express the opinion of the public, Madame; and certainly what I have seen of them has not inspired me with a desire of defending them." "Do you know that you make me tremble? I hardly venture to ask

you what you think of *me;* and yet I should very much like to know." "You can, Madame, if it will afford you pleasure; I promise to treat you with equal frankness; and, if you are not absolutely satisfied with what you are, you may be so with what I promise you you will become, if all these ladies and gentlemen do not interfere; but I answer for it that they would degrade the most beautiful character Heaven has ever formed." "Ah, Rousseau, you are getting insipid! however, let me hear what you think of me. In the first place, we will say nothing about the face; I am not at all pretty, I know it." "That depends upon the feelings which affect you. When one looks you in the face, when you have your eyes cast down, when you look into yourself, you are something better than pretty; in general, you have several expressions. Those with which I am familiar lead me to suppose that you have one which I do not know, perhaps not the least interesting; but, of those which I have seen, the thoughtful is that which pleases me best." "That is curious; I should never have imagined it; but let us go on to moral character; that is what concerns me." "Perhaps, Madame, we should begin with what is said of you, in order that you may judge better what I think of it." "Very good." "You are considered to be a woman without character, good-natured, but false, somewhat inclined to intrigue, inconstant, fickle, shrewd, with great pretension to wit and intellect, which is said to be in your

case only superficial." "Monsieur! Monsieur! do people say that of me? it is impossible!" "Yes, Madame; and, although there is perhaps not a word of truth in it, and although I do not believe half of it, I am not surprised." "What, Monsieur! you do not believe half of it? If you knew how utterly removed I am from anything of the kind! What! do they talk of me in such terms?"

He began to laugh. "Does it not seem to you," he said, "that you are the first woman to whom injustice has been done?" "What does all this mean?" "I will tell you the reason of it. You are good-natured and often taken in; you only suspect wickedness or treachery when it is proved; you are groping incessantly after the good and striving to avoid the bad; and, as all your actions are uncertain and uncontradictory, either in themselves or in reference to your words, the fear you have of offending or wounding others causes you to be considered false and without character." "What, then, must I do to avoid this hasty inspection, for what you have just said is true?" "Ah! that is not an easy matter. It reminds me of what was once said to me by one of my friends, whose character, in its weakness, is something like yours; for, in other respects, he is a man of distinguished merit, and transcendent genius, who has not his like in this century: I mean Diderot. I said to him one day: 'How is it that, with your easy-going character, which makes you spend one half of your life in committing follies which you are

careful not to confess, and the other half in patching them up, you do not often seem to be false?' 'Because,' he said, 'I am neither true nor false, but transparent.' He is sincere, Madame, and you are true without being sincere." "That, again, is true. But an intriguer—oh, no! how can that be?" "Just in the same way—owing to too great eagerness to do good, and because you often wish to rob yourself of the merit of it; or rather, the fear of not succeeding makes you take a roundabout way instead of going straight to the goal." "That is very curious." "As for pretentiousness and superficial intellect, you are wrongly judged. On the contrary, you have a great deal of simplicity. Although you have read and learnt much, you are ignorant, because you have read in the wrong way, without any system or selection. Your reflections are rather the result of the accuracy of your intelligence than the fruit of your reading. You have no clear ideas or principles in your head. Where could you have acquired any, living in a world which is utterly deficient in them?" "I have made them for myself. It seems to me that they exist, independently of education, in the heart of every honourable human being, and that he never swerves from them." "Madame, I congratulate you upon holding this opinion." "As for my intellect, I believe it to be accurate; but it is slow, thoughtful, and disconnected." "That is not false; but it is difficult to feel sure that it is true. You are a good mother, for instance,

but, up to the present, you have loved your friends for their sake, and your children for yours. The standard of your feelings in regard to the latter is the satisfaction they afford you; for the rest, that will not last. You possess courage, elevated ideas, a sort of virtue. If you can manage to gather around you none but honest people, I promise you that you will one day be a woman of great distinction; but I do *not* promise you that people will speak any better of you for it." "Provided that my friends do me justice, and my heart is not humiliated by their esteem, all will be well." "You are right." "But do not you, in your turn, want to ask me what I think of *you?*" "Perhaps, Madame, I do not care to know." "Well, such indifference does not displease me. But, by-the-way, do you know that the attack you made upon Saint-Lambert the other day did not much displease me either? In spite of it, however, I remained in a state of great uncertainty for the rest of the day." "I believe it; there are certain prejudices which are instilled into us so early, and which are so rooted in our hearts, that it is difficult to get rid of them. They are so universally received, so frequently and so effectually preached, not only by human beings, but by the phenomena of nature which are incessantly renewed before our eyes, that one cannot refuse to believe the combination of so many proofs—animals, plants, fruits, rains, seasons." "However, I am sorry for it, but I think that Saint-Lambert is the

stronger." "Madame, I am sometimes of his opinion, in the corner of my study, with my two hands in my eyes, or in the midst of the darkness of night. But look at that," he said, pointing with one hand to heaven, with head uplifted, and the look of one inspired, "the rising of the sun, while dispersing the mist which covers the earth, and unfolding before me the brilliant and wonderful panorama of nature, at the same time disperses the mists of my intellect. I recover my faith, my God, my belief in Him. I admire Him, I adore Him, and I prostrate myself in His presence." "But, Monsieur, since you—you who are so disposed to believe—still have moments of doubt, others may well have the like. According to this, allow me to have more confidence in the evidence of your intellect and reflection than in that of your eyes. Tell me sincerely, you who have often meditated upon this subject, you who are acquainted with all branches of knowledge, which I can never hope to acquire, tell me, in what direction do you find the clearest proofs?" "Madame, our knowledge is so limited that it is almost impossible to express an opinion. Shall I tell you a story?" "Ah! you are going to give me a story for an answer? Never mind; go on."

He reflected for a moment, and then began as follows:

One day a man found himself cast upon the shore of a strange land, inhabited by men and women of various ages and appearance. Having examined the different objects which struck his

attention, he looked amongst the crowd for some one who might be able to inform him about the laws and customs of the people, for he liked the place, and felt inclined to settle there. Seeing three old men with long beards, who were talking apart, he accosted them. "Messieurs," said he, "will you be good enough to tell me where I am, and to whom this country belongs? If the manners of the inhabitants correspond to the intelligent order which I observe even in the cultivation of your land, you must be governed by the greatest and the best of princes." "Nothing is easier than to satisfy your curiosity," replied one of the old men; "you are in the domains of the benevolent genius who inhabits the opposite bank. You have been cast upon this bank in spite of yourself and by his orders; he has a regular passion for making people happy, and with this object he causes strangers to be shipwrecked. He takes under his protection those who escape drowning, and shuts them up for a certain time in this country which you rightly admire. These gentlemen and I are his ministers, commissioned by him to inform his subjects of his wishes, to enforce the observance of the laws which he prescribes, and to promise punishment or reward." "But, Messieurs, since this country is so beautiful, why does he not live amongst his *protégés?* and what has he to do on the other side?" "What we put forward as his representatives relieves him of the necessity of showing himself; we are inspired by the genius himself. But we must inform you of the con-

ditions." "Conditions?" rejoined the stranger; "but did you not tell me that I was here by the will of the genius, and that my being here or not did not depend upon me?" "That is true," replied the old man. "Then," replied the stranger, "it is absurd to inform me of conditions, since I am not free to accept or refuse them." "You are not free! what blasphemy! make haste to disabuse yourself of this error." "Let him speak," added his companion in a low voice, "and beware of believing in liberty, for you would offend the great goodness of the genius." "Besides, Monsieur," continued the first, with a modest and affectionate air, "before going further, you must know that I am called Monseigneur; this is the command of the beneficent genius who has placed me here to see that his orders are carried out; in the whole country, there is only one single man who is superior to us three."

The stranger did not know what to think, when he saw men of sense, as they seemed to be from their demeanour, their age, and the respect which was paid to them, coolly retailing such absurdities.

As they were talking, they heard a loud noise mingled with cries of joy and grief; the stranger, still as curious as he was astonished, asked the meaning of it. "From time to time," answered the third old man, "the genius, in order to test the patience of his subjects, allows them to be overwhelmed while confessing his goodness, his clemency, and his justice; it is for his favourites

that this honour is reserved. It is not that all his subjects are not equally obliged to believe him perfect, for they are bound to this in their first sleep." "What, Monseigneur!" cried the stranger, "do people take an oath during their sleep in your country?" "That is the rule," replied the old man, "and you yourself did the same when you were cast upon these shores." "I have taken an oath?" said the stranger; "may I die if I know anything about it." "You are none the less bound by it," replied the minister; "this ceremony, without which you could not be considered a citizen of the island, took place in the following manner: Directly we are informed that a stranger has arrived in our country, we go to receive him; then we take at random two citizens, who are reputed to have a thorough knowledge of our laws, our manners, and our customs; they are made to stand upright, one on each side of the stranger; while he is lying on the ground asleep, he is questioned, informed of the conditions necessary for admission amongst the citizens of the island, and the two sureties pronounce for him the oath by which he binds himself to conform all his life to the belief and the laws of his country." "You are laughing at me," replied the stranger angrily; "and to what, if you please, have they pretended to bind me?" "Well," replied the old man, "amongst other things, to believe that the genius is full of justice and goodness, for he loves his subjects, and never makes them unhappy except for their good, or in conse-

quence of their own fault, or that of others; that his heart is proof against the passions; that the anger he displays is not anger at all; that the pain he feels is not pain at all; that the pleasure he apparently shows is not pleasure at all, because his soul is so absolutely perfect, that it can only be disturbed in appearance and as a form of speech. The remainder of your obligations is contained in an abridged form, in the twelve folio volumes which you see here, and which you will have to learn by heart at your leisure; but you must know that, if you interpret a single word wrongly, you are lost beyond hope of mercy." The serious manner in which all this was told him made the stranger for a moment think that the old men's brain or his own was affected. He left them, went through the town, and received the same instructions from various persons.

The impossibility of getting out of the island made him resolve to act almost in the same manner as the rest, although, in his heart, he could not make up his mind to believe a word of all that he had been required to believe. One day, tired with a long walk, he sat down in a little boat on the shore, and, abandoning himself to his reveries, said: "All this is a mere fable; there is no bank on the other side; this immense mass of water touches the sky; I see it." Thus gazing and musing, he fell asleep; and, while he was sleeping, a fresh breeze got up, moved the water and the boat, and transported him insensibly to the opposite shore. He did not wake until he arrived there.

"Ah, by heavens!" he said; "at last, then, I shall see this strange genius." He then began to look for him, and, after having explored every corner of the island, he found him at last; or rather, he did not find him; for I must confess that, in spite of my profound acquaintance with the history of travels, I can say nothing positive on that point; but, if he found him, he doubtless said to him: "Monsieur Genius, if you knew what was said about you on the other side, I believe you would laugh heartily at it. Besides, it is not my fault if I refused to believe a word of all you pretend to have done for me, and if I even went so far as to doubt your existence; everything was told me in so absurd a manner that really it was impossible to credit it." The genius probably smiled at the stranger's frankness, and said to him with a majestic and mocking air: "It matters little, my friend, whether you and your fellows believe or deny my existence; calm yourself. In other respects, it is neither for your good nor for your harm that you have lived in and explored these countries. When once a person finds himself in the road on which you were, he cannot help entering that country, because the road leads nowhere else. By the same necessity, the current of the stream has brought you here. In regard to all this," he probably added, "I could tell you many very beautiful things; but you can well imagine, my child, that I have something else to do than instruct a vagabond like yourself. Go and settle in some corner, and leave me in peace, until time

and necessity dispose of you. Good evening." The stranger, when retiring, probably said to himself: "I felt sure that, if there was a genius on this bank, he would be good and indulgent, and that we should find nothing to quarrel about. In any case, there is nothing like being always sincere with oneself, to avoid self-deception."

"That indeed appears to me to be very important," I said to him, "but it is equally so, I think, to be in agreement with oneself." "You are right, Madame, but that is impossible. The great point is to be acquainted with one's inconsistencies, and to preserve those which are most conducive to happiness; that is the true way to secure an accurate judgment and a contented mind. For the rest, what I have just told you is only a story; do not then attach more importance to it than it deserves." "Why so? I entirely approve of it." "As a rule, Madame," he replied, "when an idea or a notion is obscure, and one is unable to prove that it is false, one must keep it; above all, when it serves as a support to virtue and morality." "But, Monsieur, that is just what the idea in question does not do at all; that, for instance, was clearly demonstrated the other day." "At least you will not deny that it consoles the afflictions that are so common in this world." "What? You are going far beyond the existence of God and natural religion. You are going back to what you abandoned the other day. You now admit punishments and rewards, and revealed religion under

all its forms?" "Madame, that is one of the inconsistencies that conduce to our happiness." "I have nothing to say. I see that you only make use of religion as an illusion by which you replace others; but it seems to me that there are others which are more cheerful and pleasanter." "If I knew one capable of affording greater consolation, I would adopt it; but where shall I find one which affords us, as this does, a just and equitable testimony of our good actions? It extends our existence, and promises us a better one, which it prolongs indefinitely; it inspires us with pity for the wicked, and for the unhappy lot which he is preparing for himself." "Yes, and it makes us cruel to the honest man, whom it causes to make his hell in this world." "Does it not show him the eternal reward of the good that he does? It lessens the horrors of the tomb; it withdraws us from the life which we are bound to lose, often at the moment when, without that, it would be precious to us to preserve. It holds out to us, when we lose our friends, the hope of seeing them again." "This hope would be very attractive if it were better founded." "And, above all, it helps us to support the vexatious cruelties of the great, who commit them in cold blood without their happiness being at all disturbed, and, for a whim, or a frivolous amusement, cause the despair and misery of several millions of men whom it is their duty to render happy. I am not of a savage disposition, but, when I see that there is no justice in this world for such monsters, I rejoice to think

that there is a hell for them. And who knows what they would not do if they were not convinced of it? It is to them that this alarm is of service, not to the people, as you said the other day. True or false, it awaits them at the last moment; after having lived a life of villany it is fitting that they should die in despair. Let us not deprive ourselves of this vengeance; it is brief, it is true, but it is the only one we can exact from them. For the rest, Madame, I confess that I am not fond of public discussions of this kind. The dinner at Mademoiselle Quinault's offended me mortally. Of all the persons who were bawling there, the Marquis was almost the only one who argued with sincerity. There is more mannerism than conviction in their attitude. Eh! why the deuce should we publicly display a disbelief which we are not sure of keeping up to the end? I should like to be at the bottom of the hearts of the most determined infidels, when they are at the point of death. I am sure that I should see there the trouble, uneasiness, and fear which often penetrate through the firmness which they affect. I wish to live as an honest man and a good Christian, because I wish to die in peace, and also because this feeling in no way puts any restraint upon the course of my life, and helps me to conceive a delightful hope against the time when I shall no longer exist. To teach a man who has been tormented by stone as long as he has lived, that he has no compensation to expect for a chronic misfortune which he has not deserved

is, in truth, to render him an ill service." "All that is very true," I said, "but I prefer your story, and I keep to that."

M. Grimm came to see me with Rousseau; I invited him to dinner the next day. I was very pleased with him; he is gentle and polite. I think he is shy, for he seems to me to be too intelligent for the awkwardness noticeable in him to be due to any other cause. He is passionately fond of music, and we had a musical afternoon, he, Rousseau, Francueil, and myself. I showed him some trifles composed by myself, with which he seemed to be pleased. If there is anything that I dislike in him, it is his exaggerated praise of my abilities, which I am fully conscious I do not deserve. He has no means; his taste for literature, art, and science brought him into intimate relations with the Comte de Schomberg, whose children he accompanied to Paris. He was then twenty-nine years of age; he is now thirty-four. His devoted friendship for the Comte de Frièse and the Comte de Schomberg has decided him to settle in France, where he devotes himself entirely to the study of letters. He lives with the Comte de Frièse, who, as you know, has just been appointed Major-General. M. Grimm reckons upon his work to secure him a competency in the future. He is said to be unambitious.

He and Rousseau seem to me to have the greatest veneration for Monsieur Diderot. They speak of him in terms of admiration which make me eager to know him. I have sometimes heard

him mentioned as a man of genius; he is frequently put by the side of Voltaire. These gentlemen declare that he is far deeper; but his character is the object of their particular enthusiasm. M. Grimm says that he is the most perfect moral man he knows. I believe that they have only praised him so highly to me to make me regret still more being unable to see him, for they declare that he is a bear, difficult to catch, but in quite a different way from Rousseau. They are going to lend me his works, and I shall at least be able to judge of his intellect.

Continuation of the Diary.

Three days later.

The day before yesterday I saw Madame de Jully, who was supping with her sisters, Jelyotte, and the Chevalier de V***.[1] After supper, she told me to wait till everyone else had gone, because she had something to say to me. When we were alone, she began as follows:

"I would ask you to forgive me for having neglected you for some time, if I had not a service to ask from you; and that is not the time that I choose to apologise for my offences to those I esteem." "In this case, sister," I said, "let me make my complaint before I have obliged you, for you see that I shall not be able to do so any longer. Your forgetfulness seemed to me very cruel." "You are right, I have already told you I am wrong; let us say no more about it, and

[1] The name is supposed to be Vergennes.

listen to me." "What do you want me to do?" "Rid me of Jelyotte." "What?" "I no longer love him." "I warned you that the intimacy could not last." "Oh! your warnings were devoid of common sense; it is his fault, not mine." "That cannot be; and surely——" "No, really and truly, I am not in the wrong; is it my fault if he does not help me to enjoy myself?" "What?" "Certainly. He is so accustomed to find me pretty and amiable, that he no longer even takes the trouble to tell me so; I hope you will agree with me that it is not worth the trouble of having a lover like that." "I ought to be used to your tone, sister, by this time, but yet it always seems new to me. However delightful it may be to hear ourselves praised by one whom we love, it is enough that all his actions prove to us that it is we whom he prefers." "You understand nothing about it, sister; we cannot help incessantly repeating that which occupies our thoughts entirely. The moment one is no longer persecuted by this need, one becomes lukewarm; and lukewarmness does not suit me." "If that is your only reason for no longer loving Jelyotte, you are unjust; he is madly in love with you, I am sure of it." "No, no, you are mistaken, he is nothing of the kind; and, to spare you the trouble of going further with his defence, I will tell you that it is all settled, for I love another. Now you are going to tell me that my fancy for Jelyotte was only a whim. Well, I thought him sincere; I was mistaken, that is all. It is certain that the love which

I feel at the present moment is of a very different character from that which I once felt for Jelyotte. All men appear to me dull and insipid; henceforth, there is only one man for me in the world, that is certain. As for flirtation, you know that I abhor it. I am determined to form a serious attachment to the man whom I love."

I began to laugh. "Yes, quite seriously," she rejoined; "you are silent." "If your choice is good——" "Ah! I am sure you will not be able to find fault with it, it is the Chevalier de V***." "Well, you are mistaken, for I cannot approve of it." "And why so, if you please? Perhaps you have cast eyes upon him yourself?" "I! no, truly, no; Francueil no longer loves me, but I shall never love any other but him." "Well, my dear Astraea, tell me, then, why do you not want me to love the Chevalier?" "I think he is too serious for you to be able to look for a lasting attachment on his part. He is better than you, at least, and you know quite well that the little Marquise de *** loves him, and that he pays court to her with great assiduity; she is a friend of yours." "She is a child who does not herself know whether she loves or not. Besides, I need not know it, she has said nothing to me about it; and then, it must be admitted that there are things with which neither friends nor relatives are acquainted. As for the Chevalier, he is more serious than I am; but, on the other hand, I am more amiable than he is. The best argument, and one that is unanswerable, is the fact that we

love each other, and that everything is settled between us. He came to see you this evening by my desire, in consequence of Jelyotte's growing uneasiness at his persistent attentions. I do not wish to grieve him; I esteem him, and you must help me make him listen to reason. When you have prepared him, I will speak to him plainly, for I do not wish to deceive him." "Oh! I cannot undertake such a commission! I am sure that he will die of grief!" "Oh, no! believe me, men do not count upon a pretty woman more than they ought. A proof of this is the jealousy and mistrust which always makes itself visible through their gallantries, and the fact that there is not one of them who can resist our advances. The rule ought to be the same. Let us, at least, show frankness more than they. I am interested in Jelyotte. I should be grieved if he were unhappy; otherwise I would go and make my confession in person; but he is sure to shed tears, and I am like little De Versel, I cannot bear anyone to cry, it makes me feel uncomfortable, and I should perhaps be weak enough to allow myself to be softened. That would show want of respect to the Chevalier, and I should never forgive myself." "I admire your scrupulousness." "By-the-way, sister, if you are at home to-morrow, I will come and see you with the Chevalier." "No, sister, if you please; I ask you very earnestly to do nothing of the kind. I wish to have absolutely nothing to do with this fresh intrigue." "How cruel you are,

sister! Intrigue is an ugly word, do you understand? At least then, undertake to send for Jelyotte. Talk to him about my reputation; tell him of my proposed reformation; speak to him about my health, my husband, anything you like, provided that you bring him into the right frame of mind to hear from my own mouth that I wish to have nothing more to do with him. You see, it will be only right for me to say the last words; but I do not want any answer. In three months he will have forgotten me, and then he will consider it quite natural that I have made a new choice."

After I had promised to see Jelyotte, she dismissed me, to write to the Chevalier, whom she said she had scarcely ventured to look at. Yesterday morning I saw Jelyotte, and, to judge from all that he told me, I understood that Madame de Jully had not behaved towards him in a manner that was calculated to detach him from her. I did my best to prepare him for his misfortune; but he refused to listen to anything. In the evening I gave Madame de Jully an account of the ill-success of my preliminary efforts. For the rest, she and the Chevalier do not restrain themselves sufficiently to leave the smallest doubt as to their being madly in love with each other, and as happy as it is possible to be. I am determined to withdraw myself by degrees from this society, which is displeasing to me, and can only bring me unpleasantness.

At this supper at Madame de Jully's one of

the subjects of conversation was a worthless novel which is in circulation, which I began to read but have not been able to finish, because it is detestable. Some of the company praised it highly, and attributed it to Diderot. According to what I had heard from Rousseau, Francueil, and Grimm, I cried out indignantly against this injustice. "For shame!" I said, "this work is insipid, the tone of it is bad, and it gives a poor idea of the refinement of the writer. Can one ascribe to Diderot, who is virtuous and honourable——" "Virtuous! honourable!" rejoined one of the guests. "Why, he is a man destitute of religion, a turbulent spirit, who would set the four corners of the kingdom in a blaze." "He!" I cried. "Yes," they nearly all answered; "he is a railer, an atheist." "And supposing that to be the case, although I do not believe it in the least, does it follow from that that he has written a bad novel? That is very curious logic." At the word "logic" they burst into shouts of laughter. If all these "cockchafers,"[1] to use Duclos' word, had talked such nonsense without knowing what they said, I should not have been surprised at it; but—a duke, a Chevalier de V***, who are sensible persons—that astonishes me. If, as they assert, this is the opinion held of Diderot at court, it must be confessed that it is exactly the opposite of that which is held by Rousseau and Grimm.

[1] *Hannetons: i.e.*, empty-headed, giddy-brained people.

CHAPTER IX (1752–1754).

During a three years' enforced absence on my part, Madame d'Epinay had discontinued her diary. She only wrote me letters as a friend, which I have preserved, although they are of little use in reference to the history of her life. However, on my return, I tormented her to let me have at least an abridged account of all that had happened to her during these three years. At last she yielded to my importunity and sent me the following narrative, which I add to the other parts of her Diary.

Fragments.

Your wish to have a written account of the events of these three years is a token of interest which is very precious to me; but what will you find in it? Always the same thing: a succession of unvarying misfortunes, inconsistencies, and injustices; a disgust with life, and, notwithstanding, a desire to be happy, which I believe accompanies all of us throughout our lives, and is never satisfied.

The first event I have to recall still makes me shed tears—the death of my poor cousin.

As you know, I was a long time before I recovered from the injury which this sorrow,

following upon so many others, did to my health; I rarely went out during the whole of the winter. My mother, who was in tolerably good health, came to see me frequently; she and my children contributed not a little towards compensating me for my troubles. I had one dinner and two suppers a week. My ill-health gave me an excuse for banishing all the acquaintances whom I did not wish to keep. People like Maurepaire, Jelyotte, and even little De Versel, having called two or three times without finding me at home, gave it up. My chief visitors, and those who most frequently met at my house, were Madame de La Poplinière and her husband, M. Desmahis, Gauffecourt, Rousseau, Duclos, Madame de Jully, the Chevalier de V***, the Chevalier de Valory, and, occasionally, Mademoiselle d'Ette. Francueil seemed to divide his time between my husband and myself.

Madame de Jully was also a great comfort to me; she had entirely changed her behaviour, but she had preserved all the piquancy of her wit. Nevertheless, as she had never read nor reflected, as she had no other principles than those which her honourable character had bestowed upon her, she still showed herself fickle and inconsiderate on several occasions when a woman is not allowed to be so. We hardly ever saw M. de Jully; he led a most dissipated life, and even appeared to be completely separated from his wife. He has since then developed a passionate fondness for pictures, sculptures, and

antiques, as formerly, for jewels and diamonds. I suspect his affairs are in some disorder. It is said that he has squandered part of his wife's dowry. As for myself, the life that I led displeased Duclos exceedingly; he remonstrated with me in the usual style, to the effect that I did not deserve to have friends, since I devoted myself entirely to noisy society, to the neglect of friendship; but, as he felt that my way of living was far from being reprehensible, he cleverly went on a new tack to force me to confide in him, without my suspecting at the time that he had the least share in the fresh sorrows which overwhelmed me. I only suspected it recently, and, as I only owed my knowledge of it to M. d'Épinay, this authority does not seem to me sufficiently reliable to decide my judgment in this matter. This is what took place:

My husband was living as usual, and took little interest in what happened in his house; he never even came there except when there was music, which was once a week. At the end of the winter, Duclos said to me one day: "Your husband is perpetrating some fresh folly with these two creatures every day; he is ruining himself; everybody is laughing at him. I mean to speak to him; but it is not a question, in this case, of playing the dull sermoniser and preaching vaguely; one must know what one says, one must have seen with one's own eyes, really 'seen.' I warn you that I shall go to their house one day." "To their house," I said to him; "to whose house?" "By heavens," he replied, "those

creatures'! but only once, for I know too well what is due to you, to go and amuse myself at your husband's expense. Next week they are going to give an opera, and he is to pay for the musicians; I will ask him to give me a ticket, and then leave it to me. Do you approve?" "Certainly," I said to him; "you can do as you please." He highly praised the propriety and delicacy of such a course of action, but what he does is a matter of such indifference to me, that I hardly thanked him. He was annoyed, and told me so. Three weeks later, when he and Rousseau were alone with me, he said: "Well, I have seen the performance: you have not even mentioned it to me." "Because," I replied, "I prefer to forget than to recall misfortunes as to which I can do nothing." "An admirable maxim for idleness! Well, Madame, it is the height of folly and nonsense; in a well-regulated community, zounds! such gatherings ought to be prohibited altogether. Half-a-dozen evenings like that would be enough to bring your family to the workhouse. But I have spoken to them; I returned there on purpose, and, on my honour, I hope that it will not be in vain. It is done with; I will not set foot there again. For the rest, I was as much shocked at the audience as the actors. What, zounds! all the city and the court were there; the place was crowded, and I saw several people who had no business to be there." "Who?" I asked. "Ah, by heavens! I will be sure and give you their names. That would be very

well . . . generally speaking, nearly all your friends were there." "Perhaps their object in going was the same as yours." "What! you are not more offended at a want of respect! On my honour, they are right, it is perfectly correct; I have nothing more to say."

Although he said that he had no more to say, he did not leave off speaking, and did his utmost to induce me to put questions to him, but I persistently avoided doing so. Some weeks afterwards, as he was at my house with M. de Francueil, they held a conversation in a low voice, which I heard, but could not understand at all. Francueil asked Duclos if it was a long time since he had seen them. I did not know of whom they were speaking, but from Duclos' ambiguous answer I understood that there was some secret about it. I was dying with impatience for one of them to go, that I might question the other. I should have preferred Francueil to remain, but I could not keep him, and I had supper alone with Duclos. I had difficulty in making up my mind to put questions to him, but my uneasiness overcame my embarrassment. "Of whom were you speaking just now to M. de Francueil?" I asked him. "Good heavens! that is very sharp; I was talking of those two girls, the little Roses." "What! does he visit them?" "He? why, he never leaves them. But where have you been? You are the only person in Paris who doesn't know it." "It is impossible," I said; "I can never believe that he has so little regard for me; he spend his

time with my husband's mistress, with the cause of all his dissipation, he his confidant, his toady! it is an odious slander!" "But what do you call it, then? Not a word of all this: he goes there after the younger on his own account; it is a settled affair. I thought that you knew it; in fact, that you had given your consent to it." "What do you say, Duclos? you must have lost your senses." "Oh, good heavens! But, Madame, are you doing it on purpose? What! seriously, you do not know it? Francueil and your husband have the two sisters between them; it is public property, I tell you; it was so at the time when I went to see their performance."

This abominable revelation struck me like a thunderbolt. It appeared to me only too probable. I recalled to mind a number of circumstances which this discovery rendered intelligible, but, at the same time, I recollected a number of others which I was unable to reconcile with it, unless I was prepared to look upon Francueil as a monster, and it was impossible for me to bring myself to do that. Reduced to utter despair, I drove Duclos from my house; he set down to the state of frenzy in which I was all the unjust insults with which I overwhelmed him; he answered me in a tone of pity and gentleness so contrary to his character that I ought to have had my suspicions of it. But I needed it so much, and I reflected so little! He appeared to me so affected by the blow which he had dealt me, that I apologised for my injustice, and begged him to leave me alone. I wrote

twenty letters to Francueil during the evening, and did not send one. I did not know what resolution to take nor what course of action to decide upon. I was to dine the next day at my mother's; Francueil was to be there also. I wanted to see him beforehand; but I was not sure of being disengaged at home, and, while I was in such a state of anxiety, I did not venture to risk sending him a message. However, I nearly went out of my mind before I came to a decision; about five o'clock in the morning I was seized with an attack of fever, I felt very ill, it seemed to me that my mind was wandering; I called my maid, and, without reflecting upon the possible impropriety of what I was going to do, I ordered her to send for M. de Francueil immediately. She at first remonstrated; then, seeing that I was very feverish, she obeyed me, and at the same time sent for my mother and the doctor. I was told afterwards that they all came; but, on their arrival, I was delirious, and remained so for thirty hours. I was bled three times in the foot; and, when I came to myself, I had no distinct idea of what had brought on my illness. It certainly seemed to me that I had some reason to reproach Francueil bitterly; but, not to mention that I was not sure that I had not dreamt all that had passed confusedly through my brain, I had not strength to seek an explanation, and his unremitting attention deprived me of the courage to do so. He wanted me to tell him the cause of my sudden attack; I am told that the

only reply I made was: "I do not know. Consider for yourself; it seems to me that you are wrong, exceedingly wrong, but I no longer know anything about it; happily, I have forgotten it."

This answer was believed to be the result of my delirium, but, as I uttered it aloud, Francueil did not repeat his questions. For two days I remained in this dazed condition, at the end of which I was told that Duclos had sent four times a day to enquire how I was. He asked and awaited my instructions before coming to see me. His name suddenly restored my memory; I cried out: "Ah! not yet; I am not in a fit state to listen to him." This answer made them laugh, because they did not understand the meaning of it. I hid my face under the bedclothes and burst into tears. As my mother, Mademoiselle Durand, and Madame de Jully never left me, I never had an opportunity of speaking to Francueil, the more so as he did not seek one. If this restraint was unendurable to me at first, it at least gave me time to reflect, the result of which was that, after having so often experienced the fickleness and inconstancy of Francueil, I felt that I could never hope to keep his affection permanently. I felt that a remnant of compassion, perhaps of affection, which might be misunderstood, might deprive him of the courage to speak to me frankly, and that, in this case, the only result of an explanation would be to confirm me in a mistake fatal to my happiness, to increase his embarrassment, to make me convict him in my mind of still more real offences, which would cause

him to appear dishonourable in my eyes. After countless struggles, which pained me more than I can tell you, I decided to hold my tongue about his infidelity, but to point out to him strongly how indecent it had been on his part to form a connection with the Rose girls; and, in order to force myself to say nothing about the rest, I intended to speak to him in the presence of my friends. I had made all my arrangements, and it was certainly the best course that I could have adopted; but a reflection which I believed was prompted by my vanity, and which was nothing but a sophism due to passion and jealousy, prevented my carrying out my plan just at the moment when I was going to speak. I said to myself: "Well, but if what Duclos has told me is true, if everyone knows of this vapid and indecent arrangement, I shall seem to be the only person who is ignorant of it; I shall be looked upon as a dupe, and it will seem as if I need the help of my friends to obtain a sacrifice which I should be in a position to demand from every man who claims my regard; and suppose, by chance, he were offended with my remonstrances, what humiliation! a downright rupture would then be unavoidable; I will hold my tongue and wait for the first moment when I am free to explain myself, without any fear of being compromised." I kept to this resolution, and managed to hasten on the opportunity of seeing Francueil alone.

At last this moment arrived; we had a lively explanation, and the reproaches I uttered against him

were perhaps quite as bitter as they were vigorous. I put the more bitterness into them as I had made up my mind only to speak to him of the impropriety of the intimacy, without seeming to suspect that his heart had anything to do with it. But he defended himself so lamely, with so much passion and so few sensible arguments; he appeared to me so bent upon continuing the same course of life; I saw such falsehood in his conduct, that I forgot all my resolutions, and reproached him most bitterly for his unfaithfulness; then, considering him no longer worthy of my affection or esteem, after I had vented my wrath, I all at once felt so completely separated from him (or, at least, I thought so), that I said to him with the greatest calmness: "All is over between us, Monsieur; your future conduct will decide whether you are again to be admitted amongst my friends or whether you are to remain, in my eyes, covered with the contempt which your conduct of the past six months has brought upon you." He left the room in a furious rage, as you can well believe.

My health was not sufficiently re-established for me to endure such a scene with impunity; it made me very ill for two or three days. Gauffecourt, who had, no doubt, been informed of it, and who heard in the house that Francueil had been there, suspected the real cause of my illness; he spoke to me about it, and I told him everything. As he found more affliction than disdain in my heart, he told me that I should do well to keep the resolution, which I had taken, to be

satisfied with friendship; but that it was necessary to keep it for Francueil, and to see him again as a friend, if his conduct in the future was such as might reasonably be expected from a man who was in the main so honourable. He promised to see him, and he did so. I do not know what passed between them; they never told me; but, three days afterwards, Francueil wrote to me that he had given up visiting at a house which was looked upon with such suspicion by myself and my friends. He came again to my house, and I received him.

Do not ask me whether he strictly kept his word to me; I suppose so, but I never made any enquiries. Since that time we have remained upon a footing of confidence and friendship. As he comes to see me with tolerable regularity, I do not suspect him of having any other intimacies. Besides, he might have them and I should have neither the right nor even the wish to complain of it. As far as one can answer for his heart, I believe him. I saw Duclos again, before my explanation with Francueil. He wanted to make excuses for all the mischief his indiscretion had caused me; but I bade him be silent, and begged him to spare himself the trouble in future of giving me any similar information, whether true or false.

Some time afterwards, M. d'Épinay said to me one evening, in Madame de Jully's presence: "Nobody knows what becomes of Francueil, he is never seen at Rose's house now; it was Duclos who established him there. Perhaps you can tell

me who has made him leave it?" "Honesty, Monsieur," replied Madame de Jully, "and a sense of what he owes to all of us." This answer silenced him, but, five minutes afterwards, he began again: "There is no answer to be made to that. It must be so; you are such excellent judges." And he went out, bursting with laughter.

During my convalescence, the Chevalier de Valory often came to see me, and, two or three times, Mademoiselle d'Ette. The Chevalier told me one evening that he was bitterly sorry that he had allowed her to live at his house. He said that every day was marked by scenes of violence, some more indecent and insupportable than others, and that, every evening, it was some jealous or selfish reason that gave occasion to them. I had foreseen all this, and had even told the Chevalier; but the evil is past remedy. I have reconciled them ten times in three years; and, afterwards, when I learned that she robbed him and left him in absolute want, I advised him to be firmer in his dealings with her, or to break off the connection sooner rather than later. He has done neither, and they are still on the same footing.

I returned early into the country, and set up my usual establishment with my mother and my children. M. Grimm returned from Germany, and I saw him from time to time. I have continued to see him since then, and each time I find him more agreeable; but he is connected with two societies to which he is entirely devoted, and which leave him little time to cultivate other ac-

quaintances. He is the intimate friend of Diderot and Rousseau. Three times a week he dines with Baron d'Holbach, his friend and countryman. Desmahis also is admitted into this circle; but he rarely goes there, since, as a rule, the company is composed of only middle-aged people. He comes to see me tolerably often. He is young and full of talent, his conversation is amusing, but I think there is little soundness in his intellect. He might earn a fair living by his writings, if he would work, but, unfortunately, he can do nothing continuously. He is undecided, restless, sometimes even suspicious.

I sometimes heard from Madame d'Houdetot, who had been left by her husband on his estate in Normandy, in spite of the urgent entreaties of the family to bring about her return. She has now been back two months, and leads a somewhat retired life. I would often go to keep her company, if it were not for her husband, whom I cannot endure. I sometimes see her, however, but at my mother's house and my own, hardly ever at hers. This is far more agreeable to the Comte d'Houdetot, who is so terribly mean that he is in agonies when he has to give people anything to eat. She is just the same as you always knew her, just as lively, childish, gay, careless, good-natured, very good-natured, devoting herself eagerly to every idea that comes into her head, and yet with greater persistency than might have been expected from a person of her disposition. She acquires new tastes every day, and gives none

of them up. For instance, she has formed a connection with Saint-Lambert, and she only hears and sees with his ears and eyes. He also has been in the habit of coming to see me for some time, and I find his company very agreeable.

The Chevalier de V*** was sent on a mission to a foreign court. When she heard this, Madame de Jully was overwhelmed with grief. In spite of the change which I had observed in her mode of life for the last two or three years, I at first doubted whether her constancy would be able to last during the Chevalier's lengthy absence. But the retired life which she has led since his departure leads me to believe that her reformation is as lasting as it is sincere. She passes her time with her mother and mine, and with me. I notice that her mind has lost none of its originality, and, in my opinion, she is even more amiable and attractive than ever. For instance, she is very amusing when she talks of her husband. "Monsieur de Jully would be astonished," she said to me one day, "if anyone were to tell him that he no longer cares for me. It would be a cruel trick to play him and myself, for he would be just the kind of man to go wrong altogether if anyone were to rob him of this mania; yes, this mania, for it is not a mere delusion, it is a regular mania, a chimera, anything you please, except a delusion."

That is nearly all that has happened, my dear guardian, during your absence from Paris. This interval has not been marked by any of those violent shocks by which you formerly saw my

mind upset; my children, my mother, and a few friends have formed my usual and pleasantest society. I have found study my most delightful occupation; in addition to a little moral essay which I have begun to write for my children, I have practised myself in several kinds of composition, in all of which I am told that I am equally successful. I send you one of my essays, a portrait of M. Grimm. You have seen the original at my house often enough to be able to judge of the likeness.

Portrait of M. Grimm.

His face is an agreeable mixture of shrewdness and simplicity; his features are interesting, his manner careless and indifferent, his gestures, his demeanour, and his walk indicate goodness, modesty, indolence, and awkwardness.

His disposition is firm, affectionate, generous, and lofty; it possesses just that admixture of pride which makes a man respect himself without humiliating anyone. In morals and philosophy, his principles are strict. He does not allow himself to modify or soften them according to circumstances, but he is nearly always less severe when it is a question of judging others.

His judgment is keen, accurate, and profound; he thinks and expresses himself vigorously, but without correctness of style. A poor speaker, no one secures a better hearing; it appears to me

that, in the matter of taste, no one possesses more delicate, more refined, more unerring tact. He has a peculiar turn of humour, which suits no one but himself.

His character is a mixture of truth, gentleness, unsociability, reserve, sensitiveness, melancholy, and cheerfulness. He is fond of solitude, and it is easy to see that he has no natural taste for society; it is a taste acquired by habit and education. The society of his friends adds to his happiness without being essential to it. At the sight of that which is unfamiliar to him, his first impulse is to run away; it is only reflection, politeness, and a kind of characteristic simplicity that restrain him. As he is afraid of showing a want of respect, he frequently remains in the society of people who bore him, or whom he does not like. On such occasions, a deep silence and an air of absent-mindedness soon take possession of him.

This curious attitude of solitariness and seclusion, combined with considerable laziness, sometimes makes his opinion ambiguous in public; he never pronounces against his feelings, but he leaves them open to doubt. He hates disputation and argument; he declares that they have only been invented for the salvation of fools.

One must know M. Grimm privately to estimate his worth. Only his friends are in a position to appreciate him, because he is never his true self except with them. Then, his manner is no longer the same: humour, gaiety, and frankness indicate

his satisfaction, and take the place of constraint and unsociableness.

It is even asserted that these demonstrations are the only ones to be expected from his friendship in the course of his life; his heart, naturally reserved and broken, it is said, by the sorrows he has undergone, prevents him from being as communicative to his friends as might be expected from a disposition such as his. He listens to and answers them with the greatest appearance of interest, as long as they do not speak about him; that is the only point in regard to which he is behindhand with them. He is the only man who possesses the gift of inspiring confidence without showing it; but he proves to his friends, by his confidence and delicacy in regard to them, that mistrust and indifference have nothing to do with the reserve with which they reproach him.

It is also said that, while he is incapable of pretence with them, he possesses the art of setting before them the cruellest truths with as much gentleness and consideration as vigour. No one could be more enlightened as to the interests of others, or give them better advice; he knows how to point out the best plans, but not how to carry them out himself; no one is shrewder in seeing through the schemes of others, or less adroit in securing the success of his own. His reserved and unsociable character does not agree with the ease, suppleness, and dexterity which are required in the conduct of affairs, and which are only acquired by great experience of the world.

From this sketch, it may be concluded that M. Grimm is not equally agreeable to everybody. What, then, is an "amiable" man? While waiting for someone else to give me a definition, I should like frequently to meet others as disagreeable as M. Grimm.

CHAPTER X (1752–1754).

Destiny had not yet exhausted all its attacks upon Madame d'Épinay; it was keeping one in reserve for her, beneath which I was the more afraid of seeing her succumb, as it might have entailed upon her the most disastrous consequences.

Madame de Jully was attacked by most malignant small-pox; after having lingered for four days between life and death, she died on the fifth. Madame d'Épinay never left her for a moment. The following is the letter I received from her the third day after her sister's death, which occurred during the three or four days when I was unavoidably compelled to be at Versailles.

From Madame d'Épinay *to* M. de Lisieux.

What! I cannot even see you for a moment! I want you, I need you, and you are at Versailles! If you only knew the fearful commission with which I am intrusted! What a sight is before my eyes! I have closed those of my poor sister de Jully; no one but myself can appreciate her worth. Let me speak to you of her, of her end, of her last moments; let me feed upon my grief, for nothing can distract me from it.

The day before she died, in the morning, the physicians declared that her case was hopeless. I was obliged to communicate this cruel news to her husband and her mother. Oh, my God! she is always before my eyes; I see her room, her bed—I cannot persuade myself that she is no more; and yet it is only too true. Directly I had pronounced the sentence, despair took possession of all.

The next day, the day of —— terrible day, which I shall never forget!—the consciousness which she had lost returned to her about seven o'clock in the morning. I remained by the side of her bed a long time without her perceiving me; at last, I took her hand and clasped it. "Are we alone?" she asked me. "Yes, sister," I replied. Then, taking a little likeness of herself from her pocket, she said: "Take it, it is for you." My tears choked me; I could not utter a single word, I flung my head upon the bed, and was going to kiss her hands, when she drew them back. "Good-bye, my dear friend, my true sister; take care of the Chevalier; if I die, comfort him; he will comfort you too." She turned round again, and, shedding a few tears, said: "You must admit it is very young to die." I left her room in a state impossible to describe, feeling a thousand times more like a dying woman than she did. The physicians came about nine o'clock. They sang victory; but I confess that she had a fixed look in her eyes which made me doubtful of this miracle. When they had left the room, I went

up to her bed. "Well," said I, "the fifth has begun, and everything is going on for the best." "Yes, according to them," she said, "but I do not feel well. I am suffocated, I have the shivers, my head is not clear. I think that to-morrow they will be greatly surprised." "Why?" I asked her. She made no answer. She was seized with a violent pain in the head; she uttered a cry, and hurriedly asked me to find the pockets of her dress. It took me a minute to do so. She fumbled in them for a long time without knowing exactly what she was doing. At last she drew out a key, and repeated several times, "It is the key, it is——." She was unable to finish, and these were the last words she uttered. The seizure came on again, and at five o'clock in the evening she was no more.

I suddenly remembered the key, which I had taken without knowing what to do with it; I understood that it might be of importance to save any papers she might have. I went back to her rooms, without knowing, to tell the truth, what I was doing. I went up to her writing-desk, where I had seen her sometimes lock up the Chevalier's letters, after she had read them. It was, in fact, the key of this desk which she had given me. Then, taking advantage of the only favourable moment I had, I took every piece of writing I found in it and threw it on the fire. After I had seen them all burnt, I handed the key to M. de Jully. When he and his step-mother were at last convinced of their misfortune,

they allowed themselves to be taken out of the house. It is impossible to describe the dazed condition in which they both were; one would have thought they were in their dotage. Not a tear fell from their eyes; they sat opposite each other, with hands clasped, smiling coldly at each other from time to time. They declared that they would never part, and, if one of us tried to comfort them, they embraced each other and answered: "We have no need of it. Why comfort us? We will remain together always. What more can we want?" Someone happened, unfortunately, to mention Madame de Jully's name yesterday; they immediately turned round hastily, looked about the room, and then relapsed into their dazed condition. Madame de Jully's family wanted me to see after the necessary arrangements. I should have liked to refuse this melancholy commission, for more reasons than one, but M. de Jully and his stepmother entreated me so earnestly that I was unable to do so. "While you are there," said the latter with an air that I shall never in my life forget, "put out of sight—you understand—everything," she said, pointing to each article of her clothing, the chairs, and the furniture. I assured her that I would endeavour to show myself worthy of the confidence with which she honoured me. Then, with death at my heart, I repaired to my poor sister's house, taking with me one of her aunts and M. de Jully's footman. I began by taking an inventory of all the effects, jewels, furniture,

etc. I had the furniture shut up in a separate room. I divided her wardrobe between her two maids, and commissioned a woman I knew to sell the lace and beautiful dresses. I locked up the diamonds and jewels in a casket, and handed the key to my brother.

His grief at the loss of his wife amounted to delirium, and seemed the more strange, as the dissipation to which he had abandoned himself up to the last moment of her life, had not prepared him for it. His first freak was to order a superb marble mausoleum, which he intended to be placed in a room at the end of his suite of apartments. He had half-a-dozen copies of her portrait taken, which he arranged all round his room, and spent his time in thus feeding upon his grief. Rousseau wrote a letter on the subject to M. de Francueil, who was in the country. I cannot refrain from giving an extract from it. It will be seen that, while reproaching M. de Jully with arranging his grief according to his tastes, Rousseau none the less, without noticing it, arranges events according to his plans.

Extract

from a letter of Rousseau *to* M. de Francueil.

But to return to the subject of my commission. You are uneasy about Monsieur de Jully, Madame d'Épinay has told me. There is no doubt that his grief is excessive. In regard to its effects, the only reassuring thing is the re-

flection that two months ago, to judge from the life he was leading, there seemed little likelihood that the death of his wife would leave any deep traces of sorrow in his heart. Besides, he has arranged this same grief in accordance with his tastes, which furnishes him with the means of keeping it up longer, without causing us alarm about his health. Not satisfied with having his wife's likeness placed all about the room, he has just built a room which he has had decorated with a superb marble mausoleum with a bust of Madame de Jully and an inscription in Latin verse, which is, upon my honour, very pathetic and very beautiful. Do you know, Monsieur, that a clever artist would in such a case perhaps be extremely sorry if his wife should return? The empire exercised by the arts is perhaps the most powerful of all. I should not feel astonished if a man, even if very honourable, but very eloquent, should sometimes wish for some great sorrow to paint. If this idea seems foolish to you, think over it, and it will appear less so; meanwhile, I am quite certain that there is no tragic poet who would not be very sorry if no great misfortunes had ever been committed, and who would not say, in the bottom of his heart, when reading the history of Nero, Semiramis, Oedipus, Phaedra, Mahomet, etc., "What fine scenes I should have missed, if those rascals had not made themselves talked about!" Ah! Messieurs, friends of the fine arts, you would like to make me love a thing which leads men to feel like this! Well,

yes; I have quite made up my mind to do so, but on condition that you prove to me that a beautiful statue is better than a beautiful action, that a beautifully written scene is better than an honourable feeling—in short, that a piece of canvas painted by Vanloo is better than virtue. There can be no doubt M. de Jully is sincere, and, incomprehensible as his grief is to us, it excites our compassion. He has expressed a great wish for your return. Madame d'Épinay begs you will let us have some satisfactory assurance in regard to this.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

I spent the evening yesterday, as I had intended, at Madame Lebrun's. We were a family party; the only stranger present was the Chevalier de Valory, who was admitted to the consultation as to the plan for the tombstone. It really will be very beautiful, very simple, and the epitaph very touching. M. d'Épinay came in for an hour. M. de Jully asked him to get together all the papers necessary to settle and clear up their accounts in regard to the affair which caused so much discussion between them seven or eight months ago. It was nearly beginning again, because M. d'Épinay answered that these papers would soon be collected as far as he was concerned, but that before all it was necessary to produce the deed of partnership which they had drawn up privately; that this deed had been left in M. de Jully's hands; that he had always promised him a copy of it, but

had never given it to him. M. de Jully maintained that he had. In fact, neither one nor the other could be found. Does not that settle the matter? After M. d'Épinay had left, M. de Jully said to me: "My dear sister, in a matter of interest and honourable conduct, I have more confidence in you than I have in my brother. I beg you, do all you possibly can to get these papers found again, and let your husband devote a little care to be accurate to the matter, for I confess to you—what I did not wish to say before him—that I have no other proof of claim. I do not understand how it can have happened. The inventory of the papers was finished yesterday. They have been carefully examined, to the smallest scrap; there is no trace either of our partnership or any proof of the sums I have paid or received, and I am firmly convinced that my brother is at least 50,000 crowns in my debt."

I told him that I had a distinct recollection of his wife's having taken possession of them, but that I did not know what she had done with them; that I presumed, however, that she had placed them in the hands of some business people, because she had told me, shortly afterwards, that my husband owed him more than he thought; but, I added, I have heard nothing more of the matter since.

It is difficult for me to help them in their search, since my husband has never told me anything about his affairs, and never even allows me

to exhibit any curiosity in regard to them. This is what I told M. de Jully, and he admitted that I was right. What embarrasses my brother is the fact that this partnership is not of a nature, according to what he asserts, to be able to be made public without unpleasantness.

Your letter has been brought to me, my dear guardian; I send you this, and will come and tell you the rest after dinner; at four o'clock I shall be with you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

I am extremely sorry; I am obliged to accompany the whole family to M. de Jully's. He has this morning seen all the business people with whom his wife may have had any dealings. The papers cannot be found; no one has the least knowledge of them. The footmen have been questioned; one confounded maid, dissatisfied with the share of poor Madame de Jully's wardrobe which I awarded to her, took it into her head to say that, immediately after her mistress's death, I entered the room alone, that she does not know what I did there, but that, on her return, she had found the fireplace full of burnt papers. The fact is true; could I have burnt those papers? I do not know, but I do not even know myself what I did. What can I say? Do you understand what disgrace that may bring upon me? What right had I to burn those papers? Shall I go and tell M. de Jully that there were some, or that there must

have been some, which he ought not to have seen? No; certainly I cannot do so. If I executed instructions given me by his wife, why did I not take a witness? I certainly required two, in order to have the orders of the husband and the mother carried out. Why did I wait until Madame de Jully had expired? And why did I not at once inform the mother of the commission with which I was charged? Really, as I cannot confess the truth, I do not see what answer I can make. Gauffecourt says that Madame Lebrun is furious, that all the aunts, cousins, and gossips of whom this family is composed are chattering and making remarks that are utterly absurd and far-fetched; they declare that I am bound to make the sum good, since I have burnt the deeds; and Madame Lebrun already declares that she will take rigorous measures. M. de Jully says he will believe me on my word, and that he cannot believe me guilty of such disgraceful conduct, not even of a thoughtless act which might cause him embarrassment. In regard to this, they bring up all that I said yesterday evening about the matter; my refusal to have anything to do with it; in short, all my conduct is considered a proof of evident falseness and duplicity. Would you believe that everything I have done is suspected—even the attention I paid to my poor sister? They say that I had my own objects in view; that, in fact, my affection, my unremitting care were not natural; should I have left my children, should I have sent them away to the country during the winter, I who

openly profess so much affection for them, if I had not been influenced by interested motives? Heaven knows all that I may have done, they add; in time, some nice things will come to light; a public example is necessary, for the sake of the peace of mind of other families.

While giving me an account of these unworthy imputations, Gauffecourt was as indignant at M. de Jully's weakness as at the idle chatter of these gossips, for my brother-in-law contents himself with saying coldly that he does not believe it; but he has not the courage to silence them and make them hold their tongues. However, Gauffecourt does not know what I have done, and I did not venture to tell him. I wish, if possible, to extricate myself without compromising the memory of my sister. But I do not see how I am to succeed in doing so. Good-bye, Monsieur, etc., etc.

From the same to the same.

Our affair has become public property, thanks to the outcry raised by the Lebrun ladies and M. d'Épinay's want of consideration. He laughs like a madman at what tortures me, and says that, whether I did it on purpose or not, it was an excellent trick.

When I arrived at M. de Jully's, everyone was speaking low, or whispering. Madame Lebrun hardly recognised me, and did not condescend to speak to me. The whole family was assembled;

the business people, notaries, commissaries, and others had been summoned.

At the end of a few moments' disturbance, M. de Jully came up to me, accompanied by M. d'Épinay, the Comte d'Houdetot, and the notary. "We are in great trouble, my dear sister," said he. "These wretched papers cannot be found; cannot you enlighten us as to what has become of them?"

I heard Madame Lebrun murmur between her teeth: "Oh, yes; if she wanted to, she could tell us right enough." At the same time I saw all the ladies looking significantly at each other. I was uncomfortable and ill at ease, I confess it; but, without appearing to pay any attention to them, I repeated what I had said the previous day, and assured them that I knew nothing more about the matter. "But," said M. de Jully to me, "what was that key which you handed to me immediately after the unhappy event? How did it come into your hands? Is it not the key of the writing-desk?" "Yes, brother; it had been handed to me by your wife, and I carried out her wishes." "And what were they?"

This question embarrassed me, for the poor woman had not uttered a word, and I had rather interpreted than carried out her orders. However, after a moment's reflection, which made them suspect me still more, I answered: "It was her intention that the papers which the writing-desk contained should be burned immediately, and they were." "Do you know," he enquired,

in an anxious tone of voice, "what those papers were?" "No," I answered, "and I had no right to know. I took everything indiscriminately as I came to it."

Then all began to speak at once. Madame Lebrun rose abruptly: "Messieurs," she said, "I call you to witness that Madame confesses she burned the papers." "Some papers, Madame," I said, "not *the* papers; as for those which you are searching for, I say once again that, if I burned them, I am in ignorance of it, and I have no knowledge of the fact." M. de Jully threw himself into an easy chair, leaning his head upon his hands. "Is it likely," said one of the aunts, "that she commissioned Madame to burn everything, and that I—I, from whom my niece has never had a secret—should have known nothing about it." "Nonsense!" rejoined the mother, "my daughter has never been in the habit of concealing anything; it is the height of insult to try and make us suspect her; it was much more likely that she did so to shelter those in whom she had been so ill-advised as to place confidence. Anyhow, her dowry is gone; it must be returned to me, whoever pays it." M. d'Épinay came and asked me in a whisper if what I had said was true. I looked at him indignantly, without answering. He misunderstood, and thought that I meant to give him to understand that he was very indiscreet to ask me the question.

Madame Lebrun, almost beside herself with rage, began to cross-examine me. At first I

answered her politely, and to the best of my ability; but her tone, her expressions, her ambiguous utterances became so offensive, that I decided to withdraw, at the same time telling her that I had no further answer to make to her beyond that which I had already made.

I returned home with M. d'Épinay. There we found Duclos, who had already heard what was going on, and to whom my husband gave an account of all that had just taken place. Would you believe, Monsieur, that he also dared to suspect me of having had some motive in carrying out my sister's instructions so exactly? "You gave your husband the proper answer," he said to me; "whether you burned the deeds or not, you must always say the same, you understand." "What do you mean?" I said to him; "can you suspect me?" "Wait a moment; suspect, suspect! Where would be the great harm if you had burnt them? M. de Jully, it seems to me, has gained enough by this affair, from what I have heard said. What the deuce does it matter, when people are so insatiable?" "You must be mad, Duclos; do you really mean what you say?" "Yes, certainly; do you not see? Listen! whether you have burnt them or not, I do not esteem you any the less for it, I tell you. It is a sort of restitution to your children; that is the light in which I should look at the matter. There are cases in which one does quite right to secure justice for oneself. The deuce! the law exercises its severity against a servant who steals from his

master the wages which he does not pay him; well, they are both right. The law must be corrected . . . and then, everything depends upon luck. Man is driven, in spite of himself, to commit such or such an action; how the deuce should he be responsible for its results?" I bade him be silent, and did not conceal from him the indignation I felt at his remarks. He merely began to laugh at my simplicity.

He declares that, upon my own confession, I can be made to repay the whole amount. "It is certainly a question of amount," I said to him. "Whether I pay or not, the important point is the suspicion which this unworthy family has dared to raise against me. That does not prevent me from seeing that it is self-interest that actuates Madame Lebrun; but what does her motive matter? She will complain; and, although I have done what I ought to have done, and what everyone else would have done in my place, I shall be blamed." I was obliged to submit to a lecture upon my hastiness from Duclos. "If the deeds were not there," he asked, "why did you not call witnesses?"

You may imagine that he does not allow me to remain in ignorance of any of the comments made upon the matter.

"If Madame d'Epinay's husband were by chance likely to fail, being obliged to pay the sum claimed by M. de Jully, and she has only withdrawn the proof of claim for a certain time, is there much harm in that?" said one. "I

am sorry for Madame d'Épinay; perhaps she is not guilty; in the meantime, she is a woman whom we cannot continue to visit," said another. Can you imagine how people can indulge in such suppositions and reflections? It is utterly disheartening; and, whatever turn the affair may take, I shall never clear myself of it. Oh! I cannot endure the unpleasantness of being in this manner the talk of all Paris! I see people again who have not been at my house for an age. Some try to probe me to the very bottom of my heart; others venture to ask questions which they have no right to put, and hide their insulting curiosity under the veil of sympathy, which they have in reality never felt for me.

It is declared that my husband does not spare me any more than the rest, and Duclos assures me that he goes about everywhere saying that, by my thoughtlessness, I am exposing him to the risk of causing it to be believed that he is unwilling to pay his brother all that he may owe him. "If the end of this is an attack upon Madame d'Épinay's honour," he adds, "I shall be obliged to take a course which I shall greatly regret; but the fault is hers, not mine." This course is, to separate from me, without incurring public censure, and to banish me to a convent.

Rousseau has fallen into another extreme. Whenever the matter had been discussed in his presence, he had always maintained the profoundest silence, and had never said a single word to me on the subject. As I was inclined

to believe that I was viewed with suspicion by him, I forced him to explain himself. "What do you want me to say to you?" he asked. "I come and go, and all that I hear fills me with indignation and disgust. I see some persons so evidently spiteful and so clever in their unfairness; others, so awkward and dull, with all their good intentions, that I am tempted—not for the first time—to look upon Paris as a cave of rascals, who make each visitor in turn their victim. What gives me the worst impression of society is, to see how eager everyone is to excuse himself, on account of the vast number of others who are like him. If it were a question of giving credit for a good action, it would, by heavens! only be believed with the greatest unwillingness."

Mademoiselle d'Ette has advised me to settle the affair by means of money. In truth, everything fills me with indignation and disgust. The whole family has abandoned me, except the Comtesse d'Houdetot, whom I have seen nearly every day; there is very little alteration in her manner; however, I believe that her expressions of friendship are due rather to a feeling of pity than a sense of justice. Do you believe, for instance, that I can feel particularly flattered by the respect and attention shown me by her husband? His attitude is altogether singular. He has the appearance of admiring me; it seems as if he said to himself: "Why the deuce is not this woman mine?"

From M. DE FRANCUEIL *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

My very dear friend, how unhappy I feel that my position condemns me to retirement, and deprives me of the pleasure of consoling you, and defending you everywhere! I am indignant at De Jully's weakness. How is it that he does not silence those women who were always struck with admiration in his presence? If Madame Lebrun pushes her unworthy conduct so far as to have you summoned, and he is imbecile enough to allow it, my services as well as all that I possess is at your disposal as if it were your own.

Permit me to say that I blame the retirement in which you keep yourself. Show yourself. Your letters to me are full of vigour and courage, and bear the stamp of innocence; this is what you must openly proclaim for others to see. If I were in your place, I should go everywhere; visit your friends, go to the theatre; what are you afraid of? I beg you will let me hear exactly how you are getting on. Nothing that concerns you, my dear friend, will ever be a matter of indifference to me; you may imagine, on this important occasion, how much my thoughts are occupied with you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE FRANCUEIL.

Good God! do you know what I have heard, my friend? It only wanted this to complete my unhappiness: M. Grimm has fought a duel, he has been wounded, and all through me! Duclos came to me the day before yesterday, in the evening, on purpose to inform me of what had

taken place. "I am not surprised," he said, "that Grimm has not been to see you for some days; he is otherwise engaged, do you know? He has broken a lance for you, but, by heavens! at the present moment he is smarting for it; he has fought a duel, and has been wounded." I cannot tell you how this news, so suddenly heard, upset me; I saw the life of an honourable man possibly endangered because he had espoused the cause of a woman to whom he owed nothing, and that woman myself. I put a hundred questions at once to Duclos, who was not in a position to answer any one of them; he only knew the fact, but none the less he allowed himself to make a thousand conjectures and comments, which all combined to reduce me to despair. "In any case," said he "it is a madman's service that he has rendered you; he is a man whom you cannot decently see any more; do not see him any more; that is the only way of making his life or death of any use to you; otherwise, the harm he will do you will be greater than any service he may have rendered you."

At this moment my husband entered; he had heard of the affair, and knew (what Duclos did not) the name of M. Grimm's opponent; he attempted to make a joke of the reputation I should gain, but I coldly bade him be silent, and then addressed both him and Duclos: "I know M. Grimm a little; I have no acquaintance at all with the man with whom he fought. In any case, this duel will be an additional un-

happiness for me, and one which I shall feel keenly; but it ought to make me appear more worthy of respect to anyone possessed of common sense. M. Grimm is neither a fool nor thoughtless, and if it is true that he has espoused my cause to such an extent, it seems to me that he does me more justice than those who laugh at or blame me. Adieu, Messieurs; leave me. I wish to be alone."

You can easily imagine, my friend, what a night I spent. On the following day, I saw M. de Lisieux, who had heard all about the matter, of which he gave me the following account:

M. Grimm was dining with the Comte de Frièse, in whose house he lives. There were a number of gentlemen present, but no ladies. About the middle of dinner, the incident of the papers was talked about, and it was represented as a piece of juggling, all the more adroit as I had concealed the trick under the veil of honesty and friendship, and had made my husband give me a hundred louis as a reward for the service which I had rendered him. M. Grimm attempted to defend me by appealing to the reputation for honesty and disinterestedness which I had gained everywhere. "I have the honour to be slightly acquainted with Madame d'Épinay," he said; "she is supposed to have a respectable income. She is a woman of intelligence; she is reported to do a great deal of good, and to be noble and generous. No one will ever persuade me that, in the space of twenty-four hours, it is possible for a woman to

change her character and principles, and to sacrifice all the advantages enjoyed by an honourable person for so utterly unworthy an object; and, even admitting that it were possible, what does she gain by it? A hundred louis, according to what you say, and that is all, for it is well known that her husband's interests and her own have nothing in common. No, Messieurs, no! I neither believe, nor do I wish to believe, a word of it."

Notwithstanding what he said, this charge seemed to afford amusement. Malicious remarks followed, and it was almost unanimously agreed that I had known very well what I was doing when I burned Madame de Jully's papers, and that, besides, being deeply mixed up in her intrigues, I had had more than one good reason for acting as I did. While arguing, these gentlemen kept drinking and became proportionately heated. Several stories were also told about my husband. It was decided by those who had no acquaintance with us, that the husband was no better than the wife. At length M. Grimm lost patience, got up from his seat, and said: "Messieurs, I am not in a hurry to judge of facts which I do not know. But what use is it to have been honourable all one's life, if honesty is unable to protect one against suspicion and slander? I know fifty instances of erroneous and revolting judgments pronounced with the same offhandedness. There is not one amongst you who, if he reflects, cannot say the same. What astonishes

me is that, in such a case, by an unheard-of caprice, honourable people nearly always make common cause with rascals, as if each only felt for himself the advantages of a good reputation. I do not know what part you would take in regard to myself in similar circumstances; but I declare to you all that, if you were to be accused to-morrow of a dishonourable act, I should not believe it." "By God! I believe it," said one of them; "but—certain abandoned people!" "Who said that?" asked M. Grimm. "Messieurs, I repeat that I have no intimate acquaintance with either Monsieur or Madame d'Epinay. I do not know whether they are guilty or not; but, upon my honour, it makes me feel a sovereign contempt for those who are in a hurry to believe it." The Baron d'E * * *, who was the only person present who had spoken in the affirmative, rose and answered that a man must have an astoundingly good opinion of himself to venture to threaten others with his contempt. M. Grimm replied that a man must have little honourable feeling to think it necessary to call others dishonourable at such short notice.

All declared that the reproach was justified in every respect; the Baron d'E * * * was unable to endure it. Some further remarks were made upon the subject; the Comte de Frièse at first attempted to change the conversation, but the Baron considered himself personally insulted; and these gentlemen interfered no further in the quarrel. The two antagonists went down into the

garden to fight. M. Grimm wounded his adversary slightly in the ribs, and was himself wounded in the arm. The Baron, who believed that he was severely injured, said that he was satisfied. Then M. Grimm threw away his sword, and assisted his opponent to staunch his wound before looking after himself. The Comte de Frièse took the Baron back to his house. Happily, their wounds are not at all dangerous.

My mother and myself commissioned Rousseau, who sees M. Grimm every day, to tell him how anxious we are about the state of his health. Since my husband has heard that M. Grimm fought on his behalf, he can hardly contain himself for joy: he praises him everywhere, and mentions him whenever he has the opportunity. As for Duclos, he does what he can to depreciate M. Grimm's conduct, and to persuade me that it is very prejudicial to myself. "This duel," he said to me, "has convinced everybody that Grimm is your lover; I tell you that you will be very foolish to see him again." I replied that, on the contrary, I was determined to see him more frequently than I had been in the habit of doing.

This is the position of affairs, and nearly all that you want to know. How happy you are to be living alone in the country! Good-bye, my friend: when shall I hear from you? You shall hear regularly from me, if I do not come to see you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

Misfortune makes us indulgent, Monsieur: there is nothing so true as that. I have just had a lively dispute with Duclos, Rousseau, Gauffecourt, and the Chevalier de Valory. Just picture them to yourself, all four coming into my room laughing like madmen. I asked them the reason of their mirth. "Oh! it is nothing," said Duclos; "we were all four taking a walk, when this deuce of a fellow, Rousseau, who is always thinking ill of his neighbour, took it into his head to say to us—I forget apropos of what—that your sister-in-law's mausoleum—which, I may remark, by way of parenthesis, is a magnificent affair—is a comfort the more cleverly contrived inasmuch as M. de Jully will find a hundred times more pleasure in discussing its beauties than he has found in weeping for his wife. Do you know the reason he gave for his opinion? The invincible sway exercised by the arts above everything else. 'Come now,' he said, 'let us go to his house; I will wager that, when the praises of the deceased have once been sung, you will see the proof of what I say.' Upon that, Madame, I took the wager, and we set out. As yet your brother-in-law has at his house only the model on a small scale. The first moment was really so pathetic, that I thought I had won; but, little by little, the character of mourner was abandoned; we were bidden to notice such and such beauties, the admirable contour, and various other points: in short, we saw a man who was a thousand times

more of an artist than a bereaved husband. I turned towards Rousseau, and, on my honour, said to him quite loudly: 'Let us go, my friend, you have won.' That, Madame, was the reason of our merriment."

I confess, Monsieur, that I felt indignant that people, who call themselves a man's friend, should have had the coolness to laugh at him in his own house; I told them so, and perhaps too harshly. It must be confessed that the part played by M. de Jully is ridiculous enough, but that is no excuse at all for these gentlemen.

This evening I received an answer from the poor Chevalier de V***. He is bitterly grieved at the death of my sister-in-law. I will let you see his letter, I feel sure that you will be touched by it; it moved me to tears. He informs me that he is writing to M. de Jully, and, at the same time, announces the visit of one of his brothers to Paris, where he is to arrive in a few months. He has never been out of his province, and the Chevalier asks me to be civil to him. I am afraid I shall not be of any assistance to him; perhaps I shall not even be in Paris when he arrives.

M. Grimm sent to-day to inquire after my mother and myself. He informs us that he hopes to be able to go out almost immediately, but that he will not venture to call upon us without our express permission; you may imagine how readily we have given it to him.

From what he tells me, Francueil will soon be returning from the country. It is a consolation, but

a very poor one; he has so little need of me. Good-bye, Monsieur; do not come to see me to-morrow, I shall be spending the day with my mother.

From the same to the same.

Ah, Monsieur, what unexpected good fortune! M. de Jully is going from here. Everything has been found again; do you know how? In a manner which will leave no handle for envy or malice against me. I will tell you the details in person; it would take too long to write them, and I have not the time to spare. Monsieur d'Épinay is admirable! The recovery of these papers has overwhelmed him. It is not quite settled, he says, whether they are the real ones; they will have to be closely examined. What a man! I confess to you that I inwardly rejoice at the face my accusers will make, as well as those poor ladies who thought that no one could ever visit me again with a clear conscience. But I am chattering idly. Come and see me. Adieu! I expect you.

When the Chevalier answered Madame d'Épinay, he had at the same time written a complimentary letter to M. de Jully, with the following postscript: "Some time before I left, Madame de Jully intrusted some papers to my care, which I handed to the Duc de V***'s steward to look at. When I left, this man was away. Madame de Jully had undertaken to

get them from him when he returned; but if you should need his opinion about the truth of this matter, which he understands thoroughly, he is a man of well-known intelligence and recognised honesty, and I answer for it that he will make it a point of honour to be useful to you. His name is Félix, and he lives at the Hôtel de V* * *."

M. de Jully could not at first imagine what sort of papers Félix might have, but feeling sure that he had never intrusted his wife with any others except those relating to his affair with M. d'Épinay, he had his horses put to, and drove in all haste to the Hôtel de V* * *. M. Felix, owing to the amount of business he had on hand, had quite forgotten this particular matter. But he remembered it almost immediately, and, in fact, he had in his keeping all the papers which Madame d'Épinay was suspected of having removed or burnt. M. de Jully then called upon her, and said to her, on entering the room: "I have come, my dear sister, to offer you reparation in the name of those from whom it is due to you, but not in my own, for I have never suspected you. The papers have been found again."

Madame d'Épinay was highly delighted at this news, but M. de Jully seemed to have something on his mind which he was afraid to disclose. "What is the matter?" asked his sister-in-law. "I will not see my brother," he answered; "however, I am ready to come to an arrangement, which, if he is just, he will approve of. I will not abate

my rights one jot. I will not have recourse to legal proceedings unless he forces me; but, when our account is once settled, I renounce all connection with him from now to the end of the affair." Then he added: "Would you like me to tell you what I believe?" "What?" "My wife knew hardly anything about business or the value of money. I have thought that, when she asked you to burn indiscriminately everything that might be found, she had desired to destroy a possible source of discussion and——" "My dear brother, she was too just to have had so ill-advised an idea; and, then, the consequences?" "I did not suppose that she had foreseen them. . . . But, what can she have had burnt so suddenly?" "I am absolutely ignorant, my dear brother; I burned everything without looking at it." "You have no suspicion?" "No, my dear brother." "If she had been carrying on any intrigues—but that is not likely, is it?" "Madame de Jully used to do a great deal of good; it would be quite natural that she might have desired to conceal all trace of it." "I quite think so; do you think so too?" "In my opinion, it is the only suspicion we can allow ourselves to entertain. We must be satisfied with that."

He sighed and went away.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

Four days later.

"Allons, ferme, poussez, mes bons amis de cour."

This is what I have been tempted to answer twenty times to-day. Would you believe that I cannot walk a step without being complimented and congratulated; but what I find most amusing is the number of people who say to me: "Distrust so-and-so; if you only knew what they say about you! They must be very mean to suspect so quickly." I would not answer for it, however, that these very same persons were not amongst the number of my calumniators.

Madame Lebrun came to see me. She apologised on behalf of her sisters. Accordingly, all is settled, all the family and our friends have been witnesses of it. I was quite sincere in the answer which I made, when she began the harangue which I did not allow her to finish. "Madame," I said, "it was hard that one could suspect my intention, but I might have been guilty of the act without knowing it. It was of importance to me to be cleared in my own eyes and in the opinion of those whom I esteem. This is now the case; all else is a matter of indifference to me." She wanted to deny the expressions which she was doubtless afraid might have reached my ears. "Madame," I said, "I have learned to attach no importance to such reports. You tell me to-day that you did not suspect me; I believe it, and

I call these gentlemen to witness." M. d'Epinay went to his brother and said to him: "Well, have you got those papers? They will have to be looked at. Have you examined them?" "Yes," answered De Jully. "Well?" "Well, you owe me 196,000 livres." "The devil! that is impossible; that is very odd; there is a mistake somewhere; I have my notes." "You may have what you please, but I will neither forego my claim to what is due to me, nor argue with you. I beg to inform you that I have handed all my papers to M. Félix, who had them in his charge. You have only to hand your own to anyone you choose, and, on Sunday morning, let the person whom you have chosen present himself at ten o'clock at the Hôtel de V***. These gentlemen will settle our account, and you will have nothing to do except to pay." M. d'Épinay agreed to go himself, accompanied by Cahouet, his secretary.

From the same to the same.

When I came home yesterday, I found Rousseau waiting for me; he told me that M. Grimm wanted to see my mother and myself, at a time when there would be no strangers, since, as he would be obliged to keep his arm in a sling for some time longer, he did not wish to be seen in this condition. He is going to spend a month in the country in order to recover his health, and wants to take leave of us before he starts. Would you believe that the thought of this interview

embarrasses me? I am very anxious for it; my heart is full of gratitude towards M. Grimm, but I do not know what I ought to say to him; for, after all, I am the cause of his having fought a duel, and yet it was not for me that he fought. Shall I extol the spirit of justice and general benevolence which has guided him? That would be very cold! Such words would come better from the mouth of another than from mine. I will lay stress upon the gratitude which I feel, the indirect part—I repeat, indirect; I do not wish him to suspect me of a foolish vanity. It is quite possible that I may not have influenced his intentions at all; he knows so little of me! He hardly says anything. One does not know whether he is not making observations upon those whom he sees. Although he is cautious and I am confiding, I think that perhaps it would take him longer to know me than it has taken me to guess and judge his character. It is true that I have so long made a practice of considering everything in combination with others, that this may help to hasten my discoveries. I believe that we shall see him to-morrow. I will give you an account of his visit.

M. de Jully has told me that his account with M. d'Épinay is at length settled. The discussion was a very stormy one. According to M. Félix, it would have taken reasonable people about half an hour to settle it.

The following day.

At last, my dear guardian, I have seen M. Grimm; he came to my mother's house yesterday while I was there. When his arrival was announced to us, we went to meet him. After the first greetings, which were very respectful on his part, my mother said to me: "My daughter, embrace your knight." "I should be very proud of the title if I deserved it," he replied. "It is the cause of beneficence generally that I have upheld. It is true," he added, looking at me, "that it has never been more outraged, or with greater injustice."

CHAPTER XI (1754).

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

ROUSSEAU and M. Grimm were here yesterday. The former had been during the last four days with the Baron d'Holbach, who has just lost his wife. This is said to be a terrible loss for the Baron, and he is reported to be in a state of utter despair. He was happy; he is so no longer. M. Grimm, who comes from the country, is going to travel with him. They will be away for three months. This conduct is worthy of all that one expects from M. Grimm, when one knows him. I esteem him the more for it: but I find unendurable the wandering life of those whose society I value most highly. I said to him: "But who will be my knight, Monsieur, if I am attacked in your absence?" "The same, Madame; your past life," he remarked. And now he has gone.

Rousseau has taken up his quarters here, and hardly ever goes to Paris except to see his friend Diderot. I suggested to him that he should take us, but he declares that he is too unsociable for him to venture even to risk the proposal. What a pity it is that men of genius, and of such distinguished talents as M. Diderot is said to be,

should be so wrapped up in their philosophy, and despise the homage which the world would be eager to pay them in any circles which they might honour with their presence!

The Comtesse d'Houdetot is to come and stay a week with us; she will not go to her estate this year. It seems to me that she has formed a connection—a very intimate connection—with M. de Saint-Lambert. She talks of no one but him, quotes no one but him. Her enthusiasm is so open and extravagant that her husband might very well be annoyed by it. She declares that he is dying to be presented to me. This desire is very sudden on his part, for I have known him for two years, and he has never said anything to me about it. Anyhow, she is going to bring him. I am curious to see them both together. Duclos thinks very highly of the Marquis, but he is not so favourably impressed with M. Grimm. He declares that his only merit is his enthusiasm for music, and his only talent that of exalting above everything the horrible beauties of the literature of his country.

I have enjoyed a delightful moment, which I must share with you. Last Sunday I sent my son to spend his afternoon with his sister, who was rather unwell. They amused themselves with writing to me. The little girl dictated, and my son, introducing some ideas of his own, wrote. They sent me this letter by a messenger, while I was walking on the terrace, and, from their window, they watched to see the effect this great

event would have upon me. At first, the arrival of the messenger made me uneasy; the letter made me laugh; it was neither good nor bad. I had a chair and my writing-desk brought, and wrote them an answer, in which, after having bantered them, and thanked them for guessing that I was thinking of them, I gave them in a somewhat more serious tone some advice upon various things relating to them and myself; and, while intending to answer them in four words, I answered in four pages. The transport of joy which they exhibited on the receipt of this letter was enough to make one die of laughing; in fact, Pauline nearly fainted. But it is their reply to the letter that you ought to see; it is really a most singular performance. Their governess assures me that she did not help them, and she is incapable of telling me an untruth; besides, she knows quite well what contempt I have for snares set for maternal affection.

I think that M. d'Épinay might very well come and see me a little more frequently. When the large château was examined, it was found that the whole of the foundations on one side wanted underpinning; he intends to take advantage of this to enlarge the building, and to add a square pavilion to the two extremities of the frontage. It is a mad idea, but I cannot oppose it, up to a certain point; it will give him occupation and keep him at home. And, since it is fated that he is to be for ever perpetrating follies, it is better that he should do so at home than with others;

at any rate, they will remain for his children. He declares that he will have no superfluous ornamentation, no gilding; handsome apartments, simple and convenient, on each side—such is his plan.

I have another idea, which I wish to communicate to you, and which has been put into my head by the delight which my children showed at the receipt of my letter; that is, to write to them from time to time, and, while affording them amusement, I will at the same time introduce precepts and maxims calculated to leave in their minds correct ideas of the principal points of morality. I fancy that this will be more useful to them than the work which I had commenced, which is dry and didactic. I have composed two, which I intended to address to my son; I have consulted Rousseau in regard to them, and I send them to you, together with his opinion, which I have asked him to put in writing. I confess to you that, while I agree with his principles, I am unable to consider them applicable to my letters. I shall not finally make up my mind to consider them as bad as he asserts they are, unless you think the same. It is true that I have not read them over, but I know them almost by heart. I send them to you together with Rousseau's letter. I ought to tell you that the idea of the second letter to my son occurred to me after a visit which Madame Darty paid us without any reason. She has turned devout, and blames everything at random; she was accompanied by one of her sisters, who pays far-fetched com-

pliments. The child noticed it, and I start from that. I impatiently await your opinion. Good-bye, my dear, indulgent friend; truly, I often pity you when I think how greatly I abuse your friendship.

By-the-way, Rousseau has heard from Desmahis, who is always at Madame de La Poplinière's; he has been very ill, and will not return to Paris until January.

CHAPTER XII (1754–1755).

From the same to the same.

I HAVE only time, Monsieur, to give you the opportunity of laughing at me; however, I must first tell you that the repairs of the château are begun. Monsieur d'Épinay is in a state of great enthusiasm about his plans and intentions; he can talk of nothing else. Monsieur de Francueil is a very frequent visitor now that my husband is at home; I suspect he has renewed his connection with Mademoiselle Rose.

M. d'Épinay, after having spent an hour in the dining-room with some tradesmen, while my mother and myself were in the drawing-room, entered the room with a piece of English lace in his hand, and said: "Madame, will you do me the favour of estimating the value of this?" and while I was looking at it, he added: "I have to make a present to a lady to whom I am under obligations, and this lace, if it is not too dear, will answer my purpose well enough." I answered that it would be cheap at a hundred francs a yard. He went away, saying: "I will offer eighty." All the company believed that this present was intended for me, and everybody began to congratulate me. My mother also believed it; for, seeing him so

attentive, she conceives great hopes of his reform; lastly, Francueil himself was convinced of it, and somehow or other their conviction took possession of me as well. M. d'Épinay said no more about the lace, and no one ventured to ask him any questions; but an hour later he came and said to me: "I got it for eighty-eight livres; it is delightful; it will be little Rose's birthday in ten days; I must give her a present; that will just do for me." I made no reply, for I thought I was dreaming, while I was being made the recipient of this confidence. "Don't you think it is a respectable present?" he asked. "I know nothing about this kind of respectability," I replied.

Good-night, Monsieur, I am going to bed. I have a frightful headache.

During the remainder of her stay in the country, Madame d'Épinay wrote me very few letters. She devoted herself entirely to the education of her children, and, as polite accomplishments were included in it, she took up her drawing and music again, and, by working with them, aroused their emulation. She sometimes wrote to them; but as she had got hold of the idea which Rousseau had given her—that of only writing to them about things and in language which they were able to understand—I have thought it right to omit letters of this nature.

She returned to settle in Paris at the end of November; Monsieur Grimm had returned from

his journey, and Monsieur Desmahis from Madame de La Poplinière's. Madame d'Épinay and the Comtesse d'Houdetot became close friends. Monsieur de Saint-Lambert found my ward an agreeable and sensible companion. Monsieur Rousseau, Monsieur Grimm, Monsieur Gauffecourt and myself were her usual friends. Monsieur de Francueil, Monsieur Desmahis, the Chevalier de Valory, Mademoiselle d'Ette and Duclos sometimes visited her, but not so frequently. Monsieur de Jully and the Comte d'Houdetot scarcely ever came to see her, except when politeness required it; and Monsieur d'Épinay was never seen at home, except when he was tired of going elsewhere.

Madame d'Épinay's Diary.

December.

Now that you are in Paris, Monsieur, you must not expect from me anything more than a very meagre chronicle of what you will not be in a position to see, or of what I may not have told you. I will send you a copy of what I intend to write; that, in truth, is all that you can demand from my idleness.

Since I have left the country I have led a tolerably regular and peaceful life. I see little of my husband; he rides nearly every day, and frequently goes to see how the workmen are getting on at Épinay. Everyone assures me that he is having magnificent decorations and sculptures made, but he is having the work executed in

Paris with the greatest secrecy. He does not even admit it, and, on the contrary, always maintains that he wishes this house to be a masterpiece of good taste and simplicity. M. de Francueil appears to be either his dupe or his confidant, for he talks in the same style. I see little of him, but his presence or absence no longer affect my peace of mind.

I saw the Chevalier de Valory yesterday; he told me that he had already had two or three lively altercations with Mademoiselle d'Ette, which she had earnestly entreated him not to mention to me.

I need not tell you that I was exceedingly glad to see M. Grimm again. I find his society more agreeable every day, although I sometimes feel tempted to be angry with him, when I see him so silent. He never talks willingly, except *tête-à-tête*, and he seems by no means anxious to bring others over to his opinion; his principles are somewhat different from those of our illustrious chatterers. For instance, he only attaches importance to the opinion which is held of him in so far as it is in agreement with the evidence of his own heart. He declares that there is no man who cannot be his own judge if he sincerely desires it; that nothing is so fatal to young people as to confide their faults, and the irregularities into which they have fallen, indiscriminately to the first person who shows them friendship and sympathy. Such thoughtlessness imperceptibly destroys all modesty and the shame with which

vice ought to inspire them. I confess that, by his own behaviour and his reserved manner, he has made me conscious of something which I should hardly have noticed myself. I believed that, after the contempt with which M. d'Épinay had covered himself in my eyes, I could with a clear conscience leave him to himself, and that I could not even let it be too publicly known that our interests were separate. The attitude which M. Grimm adopts when we happen to speak of him; the way in which he insisted upon the misfortune which it might bring upon my children, if they perceived my opinion of their father; his apparent conviction that I can either delay his ruin, or even perhaps rehabilitate him, have caused me to think seriously about my children's future. Inwardly, I blushed to think that I had not sufficiently felt that the frankness, with which I allow the contempt with which my husband inspires me to be seen, might be harmful to them, and I resolved to behave more prudently. Such is the result of intercourse with persons whose principles are fixed and not altered every day to suit their plans, in accordance with their own interests.

Desmahis has returned. I have seen him several times; he is serious and appears uneasy. He must be ill or in love.

Yesterday I refused an invitation to a supper at which I should have enjoyed myself very much. Several of my friends were there. But M. de Francueil had told me that he would spend the evening with me. I see him so seldom that I

did not like to refuse. He did not come, and I had supper with Linant and Duclos. I see that I alone am a slave to my word and my promises; that M. de Francueil, especially, only comes to see me when he does not know what to do with himself.

Note from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I do not know why I did not tell you yesterday that the little Gualtieri and her husband came to dinner with me. Perhaps you would have been tempted by the music? I do not venture to insist upon it, it would be too troublesome on my part, but perhaps a pretty collection of new airs can persuade you to come and indemnify me, for an hour or two, for a very formal supper with which I am threatened this evening.

Note from ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I feel uneasy, Madame, about the condition in which I left you yesterday. Let me hear how you are. For love of yourself and me, endeavour to get well again, and, believe me, in spite of all the sulkiness of your savage, that you will not easily find a truer friend.

MADAME D'ÉPINAY'S *reply to* ROUSSEAU.

Good heavens! no, my good friend, you are not sulky at all. What made you think that? Get well into your head that I shall never consider

you so, and that, if I was bad-tempered yesterday, you were certainly not the cause of it. I am much better to-day. Good-bye! come and see me soon.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

You are right, Monsieur, I was out of temper yesterday, and perplexed. Who could have been otherwise? When you arrived, Duclos had been trying his utmost for an hour to persuade me that Grimm is in love with me. Did you ever know anything so utterly absurd? So then it is impossible for a man to entertain friendship, gratitude, or any kindly feeling for a woman without being in love with her? This Duclos is envious. He described M. Grimm to me as a nobody, a mere vagabond, who derives his entire support from the madness of a courtier and a pedant, and pretends to be passionately fond of all those who wish to help him. What do you think of these epithets? It was no use for me to get angry, to remind him that he knew as well as I did who M. Grimm was, and that he was universally esteemed. He would not give up; he cannot bear that I should call him my knight. I tried to assure him that he was not in love with me at all, but that he took an interest in me and gave me proofs of a friendship for which I was very grateful; and that, after the obligations under which he had laid me, his society would not be less agreeable to me than it is, and that I should seek it with the same eagerness. He

repeated his spiteful remarks, and ended with the following: "Whether he is in love with you or not, I warn you that he has a passion for little Fel, who refused to have anything to do with him. You will only get his leavings; she dismissed him. The cause of his last absence, and of the pretended service which he rendered the Baron d'Holbach by travelling with him, is that he lost his head. Besides, you will perhaps cure him, for he still loves her." He had got as far as this when you came, and, when I saw Monsieur Grimm arrive almost at the same time, I felt embarrassed. I was afraid that Duclos might make some insulting remarks to him; and you know whether he is the kind of man to put up with them. I did not feel easy until he had left. I do not believe there is a word of truth in all that Duclos told me. The house which Monsieur Grimm visits most frequently in Paris is that of the Baron d'Holbach; the people he meets there are not given to the society of women, nor is the Comte de Frièse, at whose house he lives, and from whom he is inseparable, in the habit of seeing Mademoiselle Fel; besides, it is a matter of indifference to me. I have no claim upon him; what would anything else matter to me? If only because I do not like Duclos to interfere with my affairs as he does, or to speak ill of those who are my particular friends, it is quite certain that, if he continues, I shall break off with him altogether. Adieu! Monsieur. I hope to see you to-morrow.

Note from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I dine to-day at Francueil's, and sup at the Comtesse d'Houdetot's; she has commissioned me to invite you; if you accept, I will call at my mother's, and will go on to fetch you and take you to my sister. Good-bye! Monsieur. What about your cold?

Note to the same.

Saturday.

Did I call you Monsieur? I must have had a bad pen. I annoyed! I angry with you! and why so?

Alas! no, I shall not be alone this evening. What can you have to say to me? I shall not perhaps have the opportunity of being of service to you, and I shall never console myself. Still, come and spend the evening; if you come early, perhaps we shall have a moment to talk. At any rate, if what you have to say to me is not urgent, be sure to make up for the disappointment to-morrow; I will not go out all day, and I promise you that my door shall be closed to everyone except you. Good-bye! my knight.

CONTINUATION OF THE DIARY.

M. de Francueil came yesterday while M. Grimm was with me. My door was shut. However, I saw him for a moment; I expressed my regret at not having received him, and told him

that, having been particularly engaged for an hour or two, I had given orders that no one should be admitted. He thought this very strange; but what is there so singular in it? Why should I not have a business engagement? Do you see the tyranny of it? Oh! I want to be free. I will have an explanation the first moment I get the opportunity of talking to him quietly. It is absolutely necessary to settle and determine my position. This uncertainty does not suit me. It may give me a singular view of things; but I should like to find a perfectly natural opportunity for this explanation. I know Francueil. The fear of losing the resource which he is sure of finding, at one moment or another, in my friendship, will perhaps make him unfair; men exaggerate everything. He will see in this explanation the humiliation of his vanity. He will see schemes—he will believe that it is a rupture that I demand—this will perhaps be the result of our explanation: he will not understand how injurious it would be to both of us. Never mind, I will have one. Once again, I want to be free.

I dined to-day at my mother's, with MM. Grimm, Gauffecourt, and Rousseau. Duclos came after dinner, but did not stay; I believe he only came to find out whether I saw M. Grimm yesterday, or to put on an air of mystery with me. He took me aside and said: "Did you see him yesterday?" "Whom?" "Eh, good God, that man!" pointing to Grimm.

I was weak enough to answer his question,

and, what is even worse, to tell him a falsehood; I assured him that I had not seen him—and I spent two hours with him. "Take care," he added; "I have made terrible discoveries; go gently, you are always going too fast. I shall see you one of these days, and I will tell you all." After this warning, which troubled me for a moment, he left. But, when everyone had withdrawn, with the exception of M. Grimm, he talked to my mother and myself with such confidence and openness; he showed an interest in us that was so honourable, so disinterested, so entirely devoid of the affectation and selfishness which is attributed to him, that I felt angry with myself for having so readily listened to Duclos. I will make him hold his tongue in future, that is most certain. I made sure it would be the same with what he wants to tell me, as with this passion for Mademoiselle Fel, which, according to him, occupied Grimm's attention so much. I had the courage to mention it to the latter. His answer was simple, straightforward, and explicit.

"I confess," said he, "that I once felt for her the most violent passion that it is possible to feel for a woman. For some time, I thought that I was listened to; she was probably not so much to blame as my vanity. I recognised my mistake, and nearly died of grief; but on that occasion she behaved towards me with so much harshness, haughtiness, and want of respect, that I was cured for the rest of my life. I can forgive anything, even a friend's unfaithfulness; but I cannot

forgive contempt. I should undervalue myself and think that I was wanting in self-respect, if I were ever to see anyone again who should treat me in that manner."

I think that, after such an answer, I can safely despise Duclos' opinion; but it is essential for my tranquillity to persuade him that there is no other connection between Grimm and myself than that of esteem, confidence, and friendship. Alas! my experience has taught me only too truly that, if it were otherwise, it would sooner or later be to his misfortune and my own.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

This morning I had an incontestable proof of that which occasioned so pretty a quarrel between us yesterday, my knight, and I cannot refrain from being, at the present moment, completely of your way of thinking. On leaving my children's room, I met on the staircase a well-dressed man, followed by a footman. He appeared so pleasant and affable when he accosted me, that, quite mechanically and without knowing him, I adopted the same attitude. "Madame," said he, offering me his hand, "will you allow me to pay my respects to you for a moment?" "Monsieur, I shall be flattered," I replied; and we entered my room. We sat down opposite each other, and began to talk as if we had been the best friends in the world, and to talk—not about the rain and fine weather, but about M. de Jully, his poor wife, the

Chevalier de V***, and then of the theatres, the arts, the sciences, the travels of this gentleman, of everything you can imagine. I kept saying to myself: "Can my memory be so bad? I have seen this man twenty times, and I cannot think of his name." At last, he expressed his regret at not having called upon me before, and at only having introduced himself to me just when he was going to leave. "When one visits Paris for the first time in one's life," he said, "two months soon slip by; however, I have asked several persons to introduce me to you; but it has never been managed." "But, Monsieur," I said to him, "have I never seen you before?" "No, Madame." "I am greatly surprised to hear it, I should never have thought it. But, Monsieur, to whom have I the honour of speaking?" "To the Chevalier de V***'s brother, Madame. I leave Paris in a week to rejoin him; he advised me to do myself the honour of calling upon you while passing through Paris, and I am sure that he would never forgive me if I had failed in this duty." "But, Monsieur, why did you not tell me this at first?"

He declared that I had not allowed him time, and that the conversation had begun in such a manner that he could not interrupt it to state his name. This is very hard to believe. It is certain that, having been previously informed by the Chevalier, I might have suspected it; but this man's manner of accosting me had so prejudiced me with the idea that I ought to know him, that

it would have been useless for anyone to suggest that he was unknown to me; I should not have believed it. After I had made this discovery, I called our conversation to mind, and pictured your reception of him. The contrast between his affability and your shyness towards all who are unknown to you, made me inclined to laugh; I could describe you both. It would have been useless; I wager that you would not have disconcerted him. He spends his time with my husband at the Prince de ***'s; this proves nothing, either for or against him. The Prince sees everybody; he might very well be received there.

Shall I not see you to-morrow? I wish to consult you on a small matter which concerns my children. Let me tell you that I shall not go out for a day or two.

Continuation of the Diary.

How detestable this Duclos is! I cannot believe what he tells me about M. Grimm, and yet, owing to an extraordinary fatality, I cannot make up my mind to reject it altogether.

When he came to see me to-day, M. Grimm was here. After he had gone, Duclos took advantage of the moment to tell me that I was inflicting an irreparable injury upon my reputation by taking up with Grimm and abandoning Francueil. His expressions have never been more delicate or less offensive.

"I have neither taken up nor abandoned anybody," I answered coldly; "my only aspiration is to have and to keep friends whom I can esteem, and who will leave me in peace." "Ah, by heavens!" he rejoined, "you will have enough and to spare of such friends; but I shall not be the one who will be able to hold my tongue when I see your happiness and your reputation concerned. You will do just as you please; you will approve or disapprove, it is indifferent to me; but at least I shall have fulfilled the duties of friendship and honesty. I will speak and say so everywhere, I warn you. Yes, I will say that I have warned you, that I have nothing to reproach myself with; but, the deuce! if your passion is stronger, if your head is turned by it, it is not my fault, and I wash my hands of it." "But, you are making an assumption that is devoid of common sense, and you would allow yourself to say——" "But, why then do you not listen to me if it is false?" "Because it displeases me to hear those ill-spoken of whom I esteem, and in whom I feel a confidence which they deserve." "Oh, yes; witness D'Ette, for instance? I suppose I was wrong in telling you to distrust that creature?" "Good heavens! that is so different." "You will make me despair. Madame, I tell you that Grimm is a clever knave, supple and insinuating. I can forgive you for not seeing it, for it is almost impossible to distrust him. It needed a man like myself to see through his character. I have proofs of it clearer than daylight. He is

in love with you; you will not admit it." "Do you really think so?" I asked him.

At this question, we both of us remained astonished, and I continued:

"I swear to you, Monsieur, that it is not possible to show more esteem or attachment, even more tender sympathy for anyone, than he shows for me. I confess it; but he has never uttered a single word of gallantry to me." "By heaven! I believe it well enough; not a word of love? I would have bet that. He is too clever for that, the rascal; he wants to bind you tight first and to keep you. Yes, yes; all that is perfectly consistent with what I know of him. He is strict in his principles; isn't it so?" "No one could be more so; and also consistent, which you do not mention." "Oh! that is another affair. Time, time will prove it to you. What, zounds! you do not see that nothing in the world is more suspicious than this strict morality of which he makes such a show." "But he makes no show of anything; on the contrary, he speaks very little, and is never eager to give his advice." "Good heavens! of course not, for he always leaves it doubtful. Don't you see that he is always afraid of compromising himself? He has the air of a man who is afraid of showing himself in his true colours; and, with all that, can you mention a single good action that he has performed? I am quite aware that I may often be condemned by my words; I say everything bluntly that comes into my head; I have no reason to listen to my-

self speaking; but zounds! I know well that my actions are straightforward." "If you are certain of that, I congratulate you." "There is no question of that. I am satisfied with myself; so much the worse for the fools who are mistaken in that. I have discovered . . . I know things. In short, Grimm is a rascal!" "The proof, Monsieur?" "The proof?" "Yes; but I warn you that it must be clearer than daylight." "Madame, there are certain things which honesty and what one owes to confidence prevent us from disclosing. I will tell you the facts, you can make what use of them you please.

"Little Mademoiselle Fel turned Grimm out of the house because he had encouraged an infernal plot to keep away from her those who were beginning to see through him. Since then she will not hear his name mentioned; and he, basely and unworthily, after having abused the authority which he had succeeded in acquiring over her by the display of his fine principles, after having made her dismiss all her servants, has had the impudence to complain of the harshness with which this girl has treated him since their rupture. Rascals are awkward. To-day, now that people see the game he is playing, he tries like the very devil, but always in secret, to get back to Mademoiselle Fel, and to regain admission to her house. Is that clear? But that is not all. At the same time he abused the onfi dence of the Baron d'Holbach, his intimate friend, to live with his wife and lead her according

to his caprice. If that is not the conduct of a rascal, then, upon my honour, I know nothing about it!"

Continuation of the Diary.

Midnight.

My heart is broken. I spent my evening with Francueil. I had asked him to give me the interview in order to have an explanation with him. I told him that it was my intention to define clearly our relations to each other; that I had reason to believe, from the way in which he had treated me, that it had been his intention to reduce me to the condition of his friend; that he ought to have seen, from the freedom which I allowed him, that this plan was also agreeable to me, but that I thought it becoming and honourable that we should give each other our freedom. I added that I was quite as determined to preserve the rights of friendship over his heart as to bring myself to this, and should not allow him to claim any other rights in the future.

This declaration, which he did not expect, sensibly affected him. He wanted to know whether it was not some other attachment which had entirely effaced his image from my heart. I answered that this question was pointless and offensive, and that my conduct towards him proved that I did not believe myself free. He told me that he confessed, with regret, that his conduct towards me might well have allowed

me to claim my freedom without any excess of delicacy, the full value of which he appreciated; but that he respected my secret. "You love, and Grimm loves you; I am sure of it." Then he added: "I shall die of despair, I never wish to see you again, I must flee, I have lost everything!" He threw himself at my knees and burst into tears. I said all that compassion, justice, reason, and friendship put it into my mind to say as most likely to console him; but I was unable to calm him. It was in vain that I represented to him that he owed it to me to treat me in a totally different manner. "I know it," he replied, "but it is beyond my strength." In truth, when I picture to myself the condition in which I left him, I find it very necessary to recall to mind the indifference with which he has overwhelmed me for more than two years, in order to agree with what I have done.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

Do you know, my good friend, that it is a week since I saw you? Every day I intended to call upon you, but I have not had an opportunity. M. de Francueil is somewhat unwell and would like to see you. He does not go out, and it would give him great pleasure if you would go and keep him company. I have some business which claims my attention; otherwise I would call for you and take you there. Good-bye, my friend. If you can lend me the fourth volume

of Plutarch's Lives it will be a great favour. Give my regards to Madame and Mademoiselle le Vasseur.

ROUSSEAU'S *reply*.

I send you my master and comforter Plutarch; keep him without hesitation as long as you are reading him, but do not keep him unless you make use of him; and, above all, do not lend the book to anybody, I can only spare it to you. If you can let Mademoiselle le Vasseur have the money for her dress, she will be greatly obliged, for she has some trifling purchases to make before we leave. Let me know if you have got rid of your colic and your domestic worries, and how you passed the night. Good-bye! Madame, my friend.

CHAPTER XIII (1755).

Fragment of the Diary.

M. de Francueil is beginning to grow calm. I have seen him every day. He has appreciated the friendship and sympathy which I showed for him. I assured him that I should always cherish the most tender feelings towards him, and I made him agree that there was neither reason nor justice in being in despair about the loss of a possession which he had for two years neglected in so pointed a manner. I cannot get him to believe that M. Grimm had nothing to do with the explanation which took place between us. He promised to visit me as usual; but he begged me so earnestly to spare him the chance of meeting M. Grimm, he promised me so faithfully to be calm on this condition, that I could not refuse to grant him this token of regard; but I only did so in order to convince him that, if I have recovered my liberty entirely, he has lost none of the rights over my heart which friendship still keeps for him.

M. Linant has asked permission from M. d'Épinay to examine my son as to the progress of his studies, in the presence of the family and a few friends. Before deciding, my husband said

to him: "Will he come out of it well, Monsieur? is he prepared?" "Excellently," replied Linant. "So much the better," rejoined M. d'Épinay. "So much the worse," I added. "Why so, Madame?" "Because I wager that he will answer like a parrot." "What strange ideas you always have, what far-fetched opinions! I bet that your daughter is not capable of even going through an examination in the alphabet." "My daughter knows nothing by heart; she will be present at her brother's examination, and if questions are put to her which are not beyond her, she will answer, or she will hold her tongue if she has nothing to say." "Very good; and you will not even hold up her brother to her as an example if he answers better than she does, for we must be careful not to humiliate her?" "That depends." "Well! don't you see, Madame, that such education is devoid of common sense, that it destroys all sense of emulation and shame?" "No, Monsieur, I do not see that. I only see that I teach her, without her suspecting it, only to show emulation or shame in things which are worth the trouble." "As you please. Monsieur Linant, you are sure then that my son will come out of it in a manner so as to do me credit? for it is I who direct his education, and intend to direct it in the future." "Monsieur," said Linant, "I will answer for him; but we must not deprive Madame of that which is due to her. I am convinced that you are acting in concert, but hitherto it is she who has taken all the trouble." "Madame d'Épinay has very good

intentions; I do not deny it. Hitherto, I have not been able to interfere as I could have wished. I am so overwhelmed with business; but I intend to make different arrangements. Madame, I undertake to invite everybody; let us make out the list. We must have the meeting on Thursday; it is a holiday. This examination must be put to him in the light of a reward. That is in accordance with your principles, Madame?" "Yes, most certainly, Monsieur." "Good! I thought so. Come now: first, the family, my brother, the Comte and Comtesse d'Houdetot. Shall we add the Marquis de Saint-Lambert?" "As you please." "Yes, yes; he will not do any harm. Besides, he is a poet; he will appreciate the child's talent better. Gauffecourt, I suppose?" "Certainly." "Duclos?" "Why Duclos?" "Well, why not?" "Perhaps he will not care—no, do not ask Duclos." "Excuse me, I wish him to be present. The deuce! his approval is not indifferent to me. I should also like to have M. Rousseau; he will put some preposterous questions to the child which will relieve the monotony of the affair a little. Ah! I beg you, invite M. Grimm; I have never been to his house; perhaps he will not approve of my sending him a note in my name, point blank. Or, better still: I will send him a note from both of us; and, if I have a moment to spare, I will call there. Do you think he will come?" "I hope so." "I shall be very glad to get an idea of what he thinks about my son. I will also invite Francueil. I

think that is all." "Yes; you have only forgotten my mother." "Oh, she is a matter of course. I will go and write the notes, and prepare a reward for the child which he does not expect." "Monsieur, remember, I beg you, that the choice of the reward is not a matter of indifference." "No, no, I know that very well." "It should not be such as to efface the delight which he will feel in the bottom of his heart at having done well, nor, again, should it distract his attention too much from the marks of distinction which I shall ask my friends to give him." "The deuce! that will affect him greatly, I expect." "Yes, if you leave it to me. I beg you, Monsieur, tell me your plan." "No, no. I want to surprise you. Leave it to me also."

My mother told me that she had seen M. Grimm the last two days, and he never came to see me. He was sad and pensive. Could he have perceived my embarrassment and reserve towards him? I have not ventured to tell him what has just taken place between Francueil and myself. I should like to be able to clear up—what? Good heavens! how hateful this Duclos is to me! I want to know why I have not seen M. Grimm; he has no reason at all to complain of me. It seems to me that I received him as usual; one does not want to ask advice, or to impart confidences every day; and who says that it is I who make him sad and pensive? It is perhaps—it is perhaps himself. I will send word to Francueil not to come on Thursday and to

come to-morrow. But suppose M. Grimm should happen to be with me to-morrrow? for I do not want to shut my door upon him. I will tell Francueil to come in the morning; that is safer. What torture! what manoeuvring! and for what? for nothing. Oh! I intend to make him feel that it is impossible that this can last; it is too absurd a whim for me to submit to it for long.

Continuation of the Diary.

I am utterly wretched; I do not know what may be the result of all this. What I wished to avoid has happened. I had asked M. Grimm to come and see me yesterday; he did not come; but, thinking that I had something to say to him, he arrived this morning at noon, at the very moment when I was expecting Francueil. I was terribly embarrassed when I saw him come in, and my only object was to get rid of him; for I was afraid that Francueil, whom I had assured that I should be alone, might behave rudely to M. Grimm, or suspect me of having invited him on purpose to meet him. One never knows what impression the simplest things may produce in the mind of a man who is prejudiced. I could not explain to M. Grimm my reason for inviting him yesterday, nor the embarrassment which he caused me, and which he most certainly observed. At last I told him that I wanted to see him, solely because I had not seen him for a long time; but that I was so busy this morning, that I had so

many trifling things to think about, which however I was obliged to attend to, that I should esteem it a favour if he would come again after dinner. He answered, very coldly, that he did not know whether he would be able to do so, but that he would say good-bye. I did not press him, either to stay or to come again to-day. I contented myself with asking him if he would come to dinner to-morrow, and do me the favour of submitting to the infliction of the hour's examination which my children were to undergo. "M. d'Épinay wishes it as much as myself," I added; "I believe that he wants to have your opinion upon several points connected with their education; perhaps you will be doing me a great service, and more than one." "Madame," he replied, "you ought to have no doubt that I will at all times render you all the services that lie in my power."

Just as he was going out, Francueil arrived. I cannot account for the faint-heartedness which took possession of me, but, instead of taking up the proper attitude, and one which I had a right to take, since I had done no wrong to either, I blushed, grew pale, and trembled, and it was all I could do to prevent myself from fainting. M. de Francueil showed such marked annoyance on seeing M. Grimm that it recalled me to myself; and M. Grimm, after having looked at us both with astonishment, left the room, saluting me with downcast eyes and an expression of sorrow for me, caused, no doubt, by the part which he thought I was playing. After he had left, I firmly declared to

M. de Francueil that I would no longer submit to a caprice which put me in a most unfavourable light; that I knew neither the reason nor the origin of the embarrassment which he caused me; that the fear of breaking the promise which I had so indiscreetly given him surrounded me with an idea of mystery, intrigue, and falseness which did not become me, since, in reality, I had no reason to behave in such a manner, and I entreated him very earnestly to behave towards me as I had reason to expect he would, and as I deserved. "What would you have M. Grimm think of the way you behaved when you saw him? You hardly took any notice of him!" "He may think anything he pleases," replied Francueil; "it is your fault; why did you not keep your promise?" "You may well imagine that, since I was imprudent enough to give it to you, I did not voluntarily break it; but, in order to avoid being exposed in future to such ridiculous scenes, I retract my word and I will make you no more promises." "You are telling me much more about it than you imagine. Who would be able to embarrass you, if Grimm had not stolen your heart from me, if you had not an intrigue with him, or, at least, were not ready to form one?" "I have already told you, Monsieur, that I had none, and, for the last time, I will repeat it. I claim nothing but his esteem and friendship; but, if I were to continue a course of conduct so complicated, and so uncomfortable, I should expose myself to the risk of lowering myself in his opinion. I should never forgive

myself for that, or anyone who might be the cause of it." "Duclos declares — he has told me things——" "What! Duclos has told you——?" "He has told me frightful things about Grimm; he is really distressed at the confidence you place in him; he takes a great interest in you; in spite of all his singularities, he is fond of you." "But you have known Grimm for a long time; what is your opinion of him? I have a sufficiently good one of you to feel sure that you will be just." "I only know him slightly, like the acquaintances one makes in society. All that I know is, that his friends value him very highly; as for myself, I have never found him amiable; but I always remember that he rarely speaks except *tête-à-tête*, and that he never expresses his opinion plainly in public; the rest matters nothing to me for all that I expect to get from it. This man will never be my friend; and, if he were as indifferent to you as to me——" "He is not indifferent to me at all; you forget that I am under too weighty an obligation to him——" "Ah! one could say many things about this obligation!" "Let us leave that alone. When did Duclos make you the recipient of this wonderful confidence?" "Two days ago; he had heard from Rousseau that I was ill." "But how did he come to make it? tell me: can you have let him see through your suspicions?" "I said nothing to him; but my condition did not seem natural to him; he guessed everything, and I burst into tears without being able to help it." "You did not deny it?" "I had not the courage."

I reproached him bitterly for having utterly failed in what he owed to me, by justifying Duclos' suspicions. He feels it; but it is too late. I see, from Duclos' behaviour, that he is only a knave who is trying to keep Grimm away. I must have an explanation with the latter immediately; I will conceal nothing from him. I owe him this reparation, and I owe it to myself to clear up in his eyes the manner in which I have acted. I wrote to him as soon as Francueil had left, to tell him that I wanted to have two or three hours' conversation with him about matters of importance. I have proposed that we should dine on Friday at my mother's, and afterwards return to my house to spend the evening.

I told Francueil that the least reparation he owed me was to continue to visit me as usual, whether Grimm was there or not. He replied that he would endeavour to do so, but that he made no promises.

From Madame d'Épinay *to* M. de Lisieux.

What a delightful day I had yesterday, Monsieur! the only thing that marred my satisfaction was, that you were not with me to share it. I had given you notice beforehand, but your insufferable business continually deprives us of your company. This time, it has played you as spiteful a trick as ourselves. My children were charming. Pauline is delightful. My son came out of his examination very well; but you must

allow me to repeat myself over and over again to my heart's content on this delightful topic.

You know that all the family and our friends were invited by M. d'Epinay himself, to be present at the exhibition of their accomplishments which my children were to give in our presence. My son was to be examined in Cicero, Roman History, and two books of the Aeneid. Linant had been giving himself great airs since the day before. When all the visitors were assembled, he went round, rubbing his hands, and craved everyone's indulgence with an air that showed he felt so certain of his pupil's success, that even the child's head was turned by it.

The dinner passed off gaily enough. M. de Francueil, who sent word that he was unwell, did not come. My daughter, whom everyone asked on what subject she would display her knowledge, was somewhat humiliated at having to confess that as yet she only knew a little geography; "but," she added, with a roguish air, "if my brother happens to make a mistake, perhaps I shall be able to help him, for I have remembered a good deal of his lessons." "That is to say," answered her father, "that you only remember what you are not taught." "Papa," she said, "I remember perfectly what I understand, but not the rest."

She kept her word; for, when her brother hesitated in two places in his Roman history, the little one, who was watching him, got up, and, with a laugh, answered for him. "What made you

remember that?" asked Rousseau. "Because, Monsieur, it is beautiful, and that gives me pleasure." One of these incidents related to Regulus, when he exhorted the Romans to reject the terms of peace which he was conveying to Rome, which refusal was destined to cost him his life.

On another occasion, my son was asked to explain a rule of Latin syntax which puzzled him, when, to our great astonishment, the little one prompted him. M. d'Épinay said to her: "Is it because it is beautiful and affords you pleasure that you have remembered this rule?" "Oh, no," she answered; "it is because my brother has had it repeated to him so often, that I have learnt it in spite of myself, without understanding it at all."

My son, however, proved more capable than I supposed him to be. He did not say his lessons at all like a parrot. His answers were nearly all correct.

Duclos chattered; M. Grimm was silent nearly all the time; it was Gauffecourt, Rousseau, and the Comtesse d'Houdetot who bore the brunt of the day. When the examination was finished, Linant invited the same company to the country, in three months' time. Pauline cried: "Then, ladies and gentlemen, I hope that I shall be examined too." "On what subjects?" asked M. de Jully. "I don't know anything about it yet, uncle; we shall see; I will ask mamma what are the most important."

I had given my friends the hint as to what I

wanted them to say in order to encourage my son, in case he deserved their approval; but M. d'Épinay spoilt all, as I had anticipated. He took the child with him out of the room, and, begging the company to remain, brought him back in a cerise velvet coat with splendid cuffs. I was utterly astounded at this bad taste; it made the same impression upon all the company, the more so as the child had so self-satisfied an air, that it was impossible to conceal the bad effect of this way of rewarding him. He went first and embraced my mother, who, for the last two hours, had done nothing but weep for joy. Next he came to me. "I considered you much better dressed before, my friend," I said to him. Duclos said: "You look very fine, my friend; but do not forget that a fool in lace is never anything but a fool." Rousseau, whom my son wanted to admire his coat, made no answer, and, when the child pressed him, he said at last: "Monsieur, I am not a judge of tinsel, only of a man; just now, I felt very much inclined to talk to you, but not now."

M. d'Épinay was a little embarrassed at the reception of his present; he attempted to make up for his indiscretion, but I interrupted the conversation, and promised my son to give him a proof of my satisfaction. Next, Pauline was questioned upon geography; she did not make a mistake in a single place. Her father had prepared no surprise for her, and contented himself with praising and kissing her. I intend to make her a present of a pretty little desk, which will induce her to study

frequently in order to enjoy the use of it. For my son, I am preparing some handsome engravings representing most of the historical incidents about which he spoke to us, or the portraits of some of the great men whom he has had occasion to mention. I am also going to give him some good books, bound quite plainly, and for certain reasons. There, Monsieur, that was one happy day for poor Emilie, out of how many months, how many years of sorrow?

Continuation of the Diary.

I greatly needed the explanation which I had yesterday with M. Grimm. His manner and his silence told me only too plainly how greatly he was suffering, both on his own account and mine, for the manner in which I had for some time behaved. "I have certainly fallen in my knight's estimation during the last three weeks," I said to him; "I hope to obtain from him the indulgence which my intentions deserve, and I also hope that he will be generous enough to put himself in my place." "As for myself, Madame," he said, "you owe me nothing. If I have any reason to complain of you, I do not know it, and you will find it difficult to persuade me of it." "Monsieur, I hope that you will listen to me, that you will reply to all that I have to say to you, with the same frankness as I shall make my explanation; and you will see that the strongest proof that I can give you of my esteem and of the high value which I set upon your friendship is to conceal

from you nothing in regard to the attempts that are being made to ruin you in my estimation. It is not M. de Francueil, as you might imagine." "I do not suspect him, Madame; a man whom you have honoured with your affection cannot be a rascal; but it might be Duclos." "Who has told you?" "The knowledge that I have of him." "It is he, I confess it." "Allow me to tell you, Madame, that this source of information ought to be sufficient to enable you to appreciate the value of what may have been said to you. He takes so keen an interest in me, however, that he has already attempted to make me suspicious of you by the secret information which he has caused to be given to me; but, when it is a question of evil, I only believe what I see, and I do not think that he will return to the subject again."

I told him all that I had heard through Duclos. I gave him an account of my explanation with Francueil, its result, and the reason why I had withheld my confidence for the last three weeks, namely, the unreflecting terror with which Duclos had filled my heart. He listened to me in silence. I saw various emotions depicted upon his countenance while I was speaking, but he did not interrupt me. When I had finished, he answered me nearly as follows. I give you an abstract of what he said:

"I have told you the truth, Madame, in regard to Mademoiselle Fel; I esteemed, loved, and adored her, because I believed that I was loved and esteemed by her. She has given me proofs of such evident indifference, of a want of respect

and contempt so revolting, that no consideration will ever induce me to see her again.

"As for the Baroness d'Holbach," he added, "only the most atrocious villany could put a suspicious interpretation upon my attachment to her. Madame d'Holbach was more devoted to her duties than any woman I have ever known; and they were not difficult for her to fulfil. That woman, owing to her character, never had need of others to make her happy and contented, but she neglected nothing which she believed to be useful or agreeable to her husband. It was for his sake that she made much of his friends. She studied their tastes, she was full of those attentions, of those pursuits which make up the enjoyment of life; but it was not for the sake of pleasing them that she acted in this manner; it was in order that they might take pleasure in her society and that her husband might always find at his house people inclined to be indulgent towards the tolerably full supply of whims with which he is equipped, and of which she never permitted herself to speak frankly unless she was obliged. As I am one of those who have the greatest influence over the Baron's mind, I was for this very reason one of those in whom his wife had the greatest confidence. This unfortunate woman has been taken away from us by a terrible malady, in the prime of life, at the moment when we least dreaded this misfortune. I see my friend, at the height of prosperity, hurled suddenly into the depths of despair by the death of a woman created on

purpose to make him happy. The world would not have me regret her loss, or show any affliction; and the most sincere and legitimate sorrow that a man has ever felt is to be the object of suspicion! No, no, Madame! it can only be so in the eyes of no one but a Duclos, who is incapable of feeling or sharing an honourable sentiment, and cannot imagine its existence in others."

I repeated to M. Grimm what I had just said to him; I assured him that I should never forgive myself for having allowed myself to be mistaken for one moment as to his character, the more so as I could prove to him that it was rather owing to distrust of myself than of him. I again explained to him the true state of my relations with Francueil. He thinks that I have been in too great a hurry to speak to him, that I have chosen my time wrongly, and that I have justified his jealousy; he is greatly distressed that Francueil has compromised me with Duclos. I wanted to break with the latter; he does not advise me to do so. On the contrary, he wishes that I should openly proclaim all the contempt with which he inspires me before forbidding him the house, and even wait for an opportunity which I can publicly announce, if there is need of it, without any disagreeable consequences to myself. He reproached me with my dissimulation and silence towards him; he was rightly annoyed by it, but as an honourable man is hurt by an insult. His reproaches were so frank, so delicate, so friendly, and yet so proud, that, in my estimation,

he is completely cleared from the horrible things Duclos ventures to say about him. He strongly advises me, for the sake of my reputation and my peace of mind, no longer to submit to the yoke which Francueil would impose upon me. I had already felt that I could not do so without compromising myself, but compassion carried me away. So, then, that is settled; I will not expose myself twice to the risk of losing the esteem of my friends, above all, that of M. Grimm.

We talked till midnight. I am filled with esteem and affectionate regard for him. How just are his ideas! how impartial is his advice! "I am flattered by the honour of being of service to you," he said to me; "but I am annoyed to see that others rule you like a child, and that, by your goodness to them, you take great pains to conceal from them your real worth. You have nearly succeeded in concealing it from yourself. If I were not quite sure that you are capable of taking upon yourself to teach your intimate friends to know you, I believe that I should take upon myself to renounce the happiness of living near you. But, what a pity it is to bury talents so rare and distinguished! You are ignorant both of your own abilities and of the resources of your mind and character." "Why, then," said I, "do you wish to avoid me, while I have such need of you? Without admitting that I possess the superior qualities which you attribute to me, I feel that I acquire some whenever I converse with you; you will adorn me with yours. I feel that your principles

are in accordance with my own heart. When I am with you, a pure joy fills my soul, and, when I leave you, I feel, for some time afterwards, a satisfaction which is not mingled with any painful afterthoughts, and which was previously quite unknown to me. Yes, my friend, I wish to have you always near me; I am proud of your affection and esteem. Abandon an idea so opposed to our happiness." "It would be a sacrifice offered to your repose," he answered. "Perhaps your friends, whoever they may be, are better suited to your position? You see that I have already brought trouble into your circle. I am afraid that Francueil's conduct grieves you; he has compromised you with Duclos, and you do not know of what Duclos is capable. In trying to ruin me, they will injure you; your husband will profit by the folly of the one and the spitefulness of the other. Weigh all these disadvantages carefully, and consider whether you will have the courage to check the advance of slander, if you are unable to destroy it." "I have considered everything," I said to him. "With you I shall fear nothing; but you must yourself consider whether you are not afraid to attach yourself to a poor unhappy woman tormented by destiny and such singular circumstances, that I think it would be hard ever to find the like combined."

I related to him frankly what had been my lot since I could first remember. I concealed none of my faults, none of my past follies, nor the foolish confidence which I have always bestowed so readily upon the first comer. What greatly affected

him, owing to his concern for me, was the caution I had shown in dealing with Duclos' impertinent conduct. "You have," said he, "authorised him to treat you with a want of respect with impunity. Do you know that he boasts of having enjoyed your favours, and of still being able to do so as long as he pleases?" "He does! the infamous wretch! the abominable creature! Nothing, I swear to you, can be falser." "I believe you, and I have no doubt about it." "And you do not wish me to shut my door against him?" "No, not at this moment; it is either too late or too soon; it would not be prudent. You must first let him see clearly that you do not fear him, and that all those around you appreciate your worth better than he. In spite of that, however fortunate for you this rupture may be, you must expect that it will cause you annoyance. Be sure, my dear friend, that want of self-respect never goes unpunished."

M. Grimm met the confidence I had reposed in him by also telling me of the various annoyances which he says have completely altered his disposition. He has promised to spend Sunday with my mother and myself. The satisfaction which his friendship affords me is beyond expression.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Well, where are you, now that the time of hearing of me is past? You complain, my cavalier, and you do not think of my distress. In

order to avoid disturbing my tranquillity any more, are you still making plans calculated to make me die of grief? My friend, we shall be happy in spite of destiny, of which we have to complain so bitterly. I have not been able to answer you this morning: I had some troublesome visitors. Francueil was amongst the number; he is more unreasonable than ever. He declares that he cannot come to see me any more. I told him to do exactly as he thought fit, and that if his conduct towards me became insulting, he would only injure himself, and lose the esteem and friendship which it would have been very pleasant for me to keep for him. That is how we stand. Good-bye! my dear friend.

By-the-way, my husband intends to ask you to supper to-morrow with my family and Gauffecourt; he has some schemes, he said, about which he wants to ask your opinion. Francueil is going to have some music on Tuesday; we have been invited. How will he manage so as not to let you hear anything about it?

Continuation of the Diary.

It was in order to put his plans for Épinay in the best light that my husband assembled his friends and mine. He wanted to consult them about the external decorations, which, according to this plan, are utterly spoiled by paltry and tasteless ornamentations; but the consultation was limited to the justification of what met with

disapproval, and which, however, he was quite determined to carry out. He especially devoted his efforts to persuading M. Grimm, who said that he thought greater simplicity would be in better taste. Gauffecourt made up a very amusing story in order to tell my husband that he was like the miller's wife in the *Trois Cousines*.[1] At last, after having held forth for three-quarters of an hour in order to prove that it was necessary to follow this plan to the letter, and after finding, to his annoyance, that only two of his friends were of his opinion, he declared, "Well, we will see; I will consider it again;" and then, in a whisper, he ordered his architect to proceed.

M. Francueil had promised to come, but did not do so. I spent an hour at his concert to-day; he had not told M. Grimm about it. It is certain that, if he does not make up his mind to behave with greater decency, I will never set foot inside his house again.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

March, 1755.

I am uneasy about the Comte de Frièse, my friend, for all your friends are dear to me; this illness of his is beginning severely. I hope you will not be lulled into a false security; the symptoms as you describe them are nearly always those of a malignant complaint. Call in several physicians.

[1] By F. C. Dancourt (1661-1725), a very prolific writer for the stage.

Will you not come to dinner? I want to see you so much. You were very downcast yesterday; remember what you promised me. If I do not see you before six o'clock, I shall come to your door to enquire after my patients. Good-bye!

The following day.

According to the report which I received when I awoke, if your patient's condition remains the same until the evening, he is saved. I am very glad that the Duc d'Orléans came to see him, and that you were present. I am also very pleased to hear that, in the Comte's present condition, he thought of presenting you to the Prince; let him recover and all will be for the best.

Francueil came this morning to know why I had refused to go and hear some music at his house in the evening. I told him that I did not like his affectation in excluding you from all the gatherings to which he formerly invited you; that I considered it natural enough that he should not run after you; but that he must learn how to meet you and admit you when it was necessary. I added, besides, that I had looked over such trifles at first, but that the continuance of such conduct would soon cease to affect me; in reality, my friend, I did not tell the truth, for he pained me; he threw himself at my knees, vowing that he was as much in love with me as the first day, and that it was barbarous on my part to force him to be a witness of that which was his torture. "I do not force

you," I said to him, "but I do not intend to go to your house, since the door is shut against him." This discussion lasted a long time. At last, he gave me this note to invite you for this evening. If you have a moment to spare, go there; it will amuse you. I shall not go myself, for, to tell the truth, my friend, I have not the courage to overwhelm him. Let me hear how my patients are progressing. Good-bye!

Note from M. GRIMM.

I have received your note, and am much obliged to you for it. You have spoken to M. de Francueil in a proper manner. As soon as he behaves as he ought, he will be satisfied, and will learn what treatment he has a right to expect if he behaves honourably. I will thank him, and assure him that I will do what depends upon myself to take advantage of his invitation; but I shall certainly not go. Although the Comte is pretty well to-day, I cannot make up my mind to leave him. Go and hear some music; take your children there; amuse yourself, my kind friend. I hope almost immediately to resume the delightful practice of not leaving you again.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

March 30, 1755.

Monsieur, I am utterly wretched; M. Grimm has had an irreparable loss. Where will he go?

What will become of him? He has nothing; with the Comte he wanted nothing. If you knew with what feelings I heard of this misfortune!

I had sent twice yesterday in the afternoon to enquire after the Comte's illness. I felt uneasy, without exactly knowing why. At nine o'clock, I was told that he had had a slight paroxysm, but not attended by any serious consequences. I was going to write when Duclos came in. "Well," he said, coming up to me, "what are you going to do with Grimm now? This is a fine chance for him to play the man in despair." "What do you mean?" I asked. "Good heavens! don't you really know? Do you mean to say you don't know that the Comte de Frièse is dead?" I uttered a piercing cry, and remained motionless from the shock. M. Grimm's grief at not hearing anything about me, the uncertainty of his future,—all presented itself to my mind at once. I turned my back on Duclos, and wrote immediately to M. Grimm. Duclos took advantage of my distress, took my note and read it while I was looking for something to fasten it with. "Are you mad," he said, "to write such a note on an occasion like this? One does not know into what hands it may fall during the confusion inseparable from such an event. I do not think it is over-decent to declare publicly that 'you are more overwhelmed than he is by his misfortune,' or that 'he is your very dear friend,' still less, that 'you will not breathe again until he is by your side.' Deuce take me! one would say that the Comte was your lover, to judge

from the state you are in; for, of course, it is not Grimm, you have taken your oath of that to me. A simple expression of sympathy, signed by you, that is the proper thing for the occasion." "Monsieur, you are right, this note is wrong," I said, and wrote the following instead: "My friend, you cannot feel more keenly than myself the misfortune which has happened to you. It is the lot of the honourable man to suffer, and to find around him arms stretched out to receive him and to dry his tears; come and weep for him who deserves all your regrets in company with my mother and myself. You still have your virtue, your courage and many friends. I am writing to you in Duclos' presence; but, now that this letter has been written, you will find neither him nor anyone else at my house, except those whom you will permit to mingle their tears with yours."

I received a note from M. Grimm, asking me if he could see me. I sent him my letter after I had read it to Duclos, and then dismissed the latter. While I had been writing he had interrupted me half-a-dozen times to dictate to me. He left the room furious. After he had gone, while putting my desk in order, I was unable to find my first note. I immediately wrote to him to know what he had done with it. He replied that, since I was unable to find it, he had probably burnt it; that I knew very well that he did not care about useless papers. M. Grimm arrived, sorrow and dejection depicted upon his countenance. "Is it possible," he said to me

on entering, "that you intend to desert me at such a moment?" "I! my friend, can you imagine it?" I replied. I told him that I had known nothing about the unhappy event, and described the combination of circumstances which had prevented me from sending to him sooner. He told me that the Comte had died quite suddenly. His friends have made up their minds to go and shut themselves up at Saint-Cloud for five or six days, and have made M. Grimm accompany them. This absence, in the society of those who are not so dear to him as we are, seems to me an increase of affliction for him.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

What! I cannot even tell you before you leave how I love and revere the Duc d'Orléans for all that he is doing on your behalf. As for yourself, I can imagine your feeling of delicacy; but, my friend, time will soften your sorrows, and your position will be the same; your letter has made me weep for joy. Remember that you promised me to think of yourself, if I did not give you up. That is the only way to restore my peace of mind. I declare to you that I will take care of myself in proportion as I see you do the same by yourself. You have no idea of all that the friends of the poor Comte think and say of you. How happy I should be if you were not in such grief! Really, the most interesting creature living! what a friend! what a man!

Such are the things I have heard incessantly for the last two days, I who feel it far more than they. Yes, I believe that I am as enthusiastic an admirer of you as anyone could be of virtue.

Continuation of the Diary.

M. Grimm sends his man every day to make enquiries, and to tell me about himself. He is well, but he is so prostrated that he can hardly speak. He has not written to me for two days; I have just reproached him for it. Rousseau also is unwell; he really looked very ill yesterday. He refuses to do anything, and will not consult a physician. If I do not hear a good report of him this evening I shall send one to him.

Note from Madame d'Épinay *to* Rousseau.

Good heavens! my dear friend, how distressed I am about you, and how I regret not to be able to keep you company! Assure me at least that you want for nothing, and that I may count upon your remembering the promise you made me, that, in that case, you would apply to me? I am very well, but I am recovering my strength very slowly. Good-bye! Do not write to me if it tires you, but be sure and let me know how you are getting on. I am not strong enough to write any more.

ROUSSEAU'S *reply*.

I lack the pleasure of your society; that is my greatest misfortune and my only need. In other respects, do not be uneasy on my account; I am perhaps more indisposed than in real pain, but I cannot go out in my present state of health. Besides, I must wait until the present weather is over, during which I never go out. I cannot tell you what great comfort I find in our last talks together; but, until we are able to resume them, for Heaven's sake take care of your health.

Another note from ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

For Heaven's sake, Madame, do not send M. Malouin to me any more. I am not quite well enough to listen to his chattering with pleasure. I was trembling all day yesterday at the idea of seeing him arrive; save me from the apprehension of perhaps being reduced to the necessity of treating rudely an honourable man whom I esteem, and who comes to me from you; and do not join the number of those troublesome friends who, in their efforts to make me live after their fashion, will make me die of chagrin. In truth, I should like to be in the depths of a wilderness when I am ill.

Another thing: overwhelmed with unseasonable visits from troublesome people, I breathed again when I saw M. de Saint-Lambert, and I told him my troubles with that sort of confidence which I feel from the first for people whom I esteem and respect. Has he not taken it as referring to himself?

At least, I am bound to believe so, from what he said to me when he left, and from the message he sent to me by his footman. Thus I have the happiness of gathering round me all whom I should like to avoid, and of keeping away all whom I should like to see; that is certainly neither very happy nor clever on my part. I have not even heard of Diderot. What a decided vocation for keeping to myself and never seeing anyone else but you! Good-bye! Madame. I am sending to enquire after Grimm's health and yours. I am afraid you will guess the state of my own only too well from the tone of this note. I had a bad night, during which, as you perceive, my bile has been upset. I am better this morning. I am writing to you, and imperceptibly everything is becoming calm.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Tuesday.

My friend, you allow yourself to be overwhelmed by your sorrow, and you do not consider that you have friends to console for your misfortune; friends to whom you are necessary, and who have nothing left if you desert them. If only you could see us! if you knew the impression produced in our circle by the suffering you feel! Duclos does not venture to show himself among us; he is doing himself justice for the first time in his life. Gauffecourt, the Marquis de Saint-Lambert, and the Comtesse are never comfortable unless they

are with me or my mother. We are counting the days you still have to be away, and we intend to take you to d'Épinay as soon as you return; we will all go if it is agreeable to you; the idea is my mother's. Yesterday we met Baron d'Holbach at the Tuileries; we did not know each other, but we guessed our identities. Rousseau was with us; it was the first time he had gone out. The Baron accosted us, and we immediately began to speak of you. The Baron is peculiar; he made an attack upon the stupidity of the Comte's friends in taking you away from your friends in order to keep you at Saint-Cloud, where it will be impossible for you to feel comfortable. I informed him that it was in order to give you the opportunity of becoming more intimately known to the Duc d'Orléans, who was to pay a visit to your hosts. "They are doing," I added, "what each of us would like to do." "No one knows better than I do," he replied, "how Grimm is to be pitied; but all these people are no comfort to him." "On my honour," rejoined Rousseau, "I see that it is not misfortune that makes people most unhappy, it is the mania that everybody has for consoling him, and rendering him services at random. Why can't people leave him to himself? As for me, I declare that, if any misfortune should happen to me which my friends do not think they can avoid taking notice of, I wish they would allow me to select the kind of comfort which is suited to me, for, in fact, I ought to know better than another person what is agreeable to me." Under different

circumstances, I might perhaps have checked the continuance of this discussion, which lasted some considerable time; but I had returned to Saint-Cloud, when the conversation became general.

Continuation of the Diary.

The Chevalier de Valory, with whom I spent the day yesterday, confided to me the course he has been obliged to take in order to avoid the ill-temper of Mademoiselle d'Ette, which is becoming every day more insupportable. He has just acquired an estate in the neighbourhood of his brother's, and he has persuaded him to let one of his daughters live with him to do the honours of his house. She will arrive in Paris almost immediately, and will go back with her uncle. Mademoiselle d'Ette knows nothing about this arrangement. The Chevalier intends to keep her in ignorance until he has left, in order to avoid the violent scenes which will be sure to be the result of this farewell. He is even going at first to spend a few weeks at his brother's house, in order to shelter himself from her first outbursts of rage. I do not think this is a needless precaution.

From Madame d'Épinay *to* M. Grimm.

At last I have got rid of Duclos, and I hope, my friend, that you will not disapprove of what I have done. His impertinence was so marked yesterday that it was really impossible to put

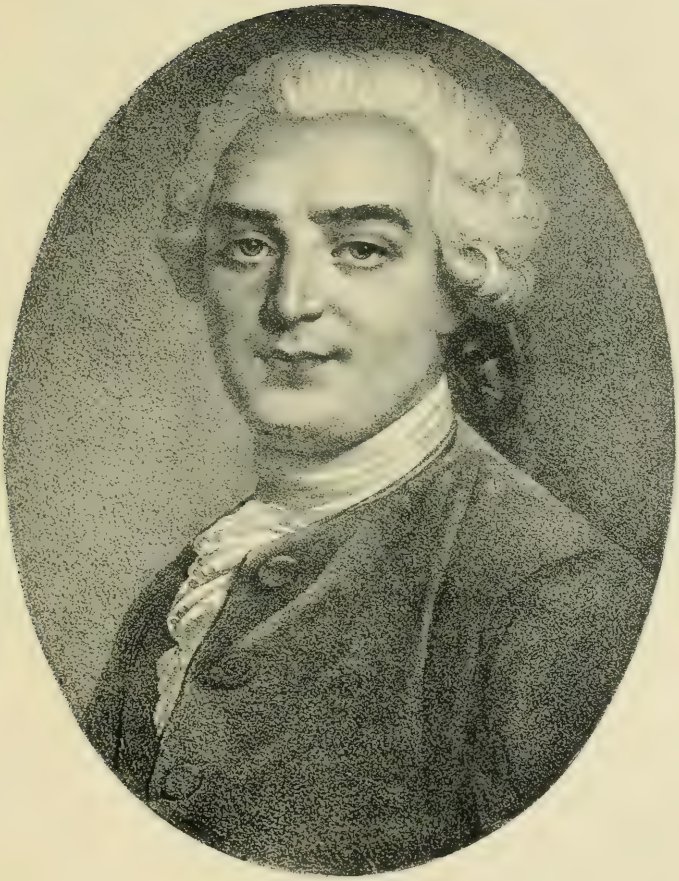
up with it. The following was what took place; you can form your own opinion upon my conduct.

I do not know whether I have told you that Valory's niece, who is staying in Paris for a fortnight only, had entreated me to give her the opportunity of hearing Jelyotte. I accordingly fixed a day with him; but, without settling anything, he gave me to understand that if Duclos was there he would not sing. "I have obtained a fortnight's leave to rest myself," he said, "and the public might not be pleased if I employed it in singing at suppers." I told him that he could come with the certainty of finding only a small audience, and one not at all likely to cause him any annoyance. I accordingly made arrangements to have nobody but the Chevalier, his niece, and Mademoiselle d'Ette. I was not at home to anyone else, not even to you, as I told you.

Duclos had sent during the morning to ask whether I should be at home in the evening. I replied "No." At six o'clock he presented himself; he was told that I was out. He replied that he would come in and wait for me. My servants, not knowing what do do, objected that they had no orders, and that they could not admit anyone. He asked to see Linant, and was allowed to go in. He went to my son's room. My son's servant said that he would go and inform him. "Where is he?" he asked. "In Madame's apartments." "I will go there," he said; and he entered my room, laughing like a madman. "By God!" he said, "I knew quite well she was at home."

Charles Pineau Duclos

Engraved from the portrait in the French Academy



"Yes, Monsieur," I rejoined, "but not to you, as I informed you."

I sent my children away in order to have an opportunity of rebuking Duclos for his insolence. "You will make me dismiss my door-keeper for having disobeyed my orders," said I. "It is not his fault," he rejoined; and he related to me what I have just told you. "I am quite aware," he continued, "that you had informed me that you would not be at home, but I did not believe it, and I want to know who are the persons with whom I may not associate." I replied that it seemed to me very strange that I could not do anything in my own house without his being informed of it; that I had told him so definitely, and more than once, that I wanted to be free, that he ought to have considered it settled; and, lastly, that I had quite made up my mind to ask him to go away without giving him any further explanation of my wishes. But his curiosity gained the day and induced him to answer more mildly than I expected. "I will go," he said, "I will go when supper is served, or when your visitors arrive." I saw, from something else he said, that he suspected I was expecting you, and intended to sup alone with you. Seeing that he gained nothing by questioning, he said: "Confess that you are expecting Grimm, and I will go." "I have nothing to confess," I replied, "unless it be that you will force me to take violent measures if you do not go." Then, fearing that some disagreeable outburst might result from

his suspicions, I added: "Who would make it necessary for me, I ask you, to shut my door and make a mystery of it, if I were expecting M. Grimm?" "The deuce, Madame! I did not think you were so——" "If I tell you who it is I am expecting, will you go at once?" "Yes, on my honour." "I am expecting the Chevalier de Valory and his niece." "Ah, ah! and Jelyotte; isn't it so? And why did you not tell me?" "I do not say so." "No, but I say so. Didn't I hear the other day? She asked you; I was there. The coxcomb! I am sure that it is he who has required that I should not be present, and you are foolish enough to lend yourself to such impertinence. A nice part he is making you play! Deuce take me! to drive away your friends! A puppy who only needs a cold to annihilate his entire existence!"

He had reached this point when my servant came to ask me an address for a parcel which I was sending to someone. "You will find the card on the mantelpiece," I said. He and I both looked for it without being able to find it. Duclos, who was impatient at Cahouet's presence, said to me: "What! those old addresses which were there? I have just thrown them in the fire; you know quite well that I am not fond of useless papers. What the deuce does it matter? If you wanted them, why didn't you lock them up?" "Monsieur," I said to him, "this impertinence is too much. I claim to be mistress in my own house, and no one else; and, in order to prove

it to you, I ask you to leave it immediately." "Zounds!" he replied, "I shan't be in a hurry to come back, and, if you want people to toady you, I swear that I will never set foot inside it again, even though you should go on your knees to ask me."

I confess to you that this scene upset me so much for the rest of the evening that I was unable to enjoy anything. I attributed my uneasiness to the state of my health, and my word was believed. Now that it is an accomplished fact, I believe, in truth, that I am only too happy to have had so suitable an opportunity of getting rid of a man whose tyranny humiliated me in proportion as it was unbearable. Good-bye! my friend. I am going for a little fresh air to take a turn in the Tuileries with my children. Shall I see you this evening?

Continuation of the Diary.

It is very singular! There are things—oh, I cannot understand it at all! What impudence! In spite of Duclos' pretended anger, yesterday morning, when I came in from my walk, I found that he had called. This made me resolve to give such instructions as would ensure me against seeing him, whatever measures he might take to obtain an interview. I imagined that he had felt the impropriety of his conduct, and that he was anxious to make his excuses; but M. Grimm, who had approved of the course I had taken, had ad-

vised me not to see him again, at least until he apologised to me in writing and clearly admitted his impertinence. Far from this being the case, when I awoke this morning I found the following note from him:

"Let me know if you sup at home to-night. I forget your outburst of passion when I think of the injury a rupture with me would do to your reputation. Poor child! you make me pity you! You are being played with, and you do not suspect it. I must be a very honest man to behave towards you as I do."

I felt so disgusted with this note, that, if Duclos had presented himself, I believe that I should have had him thrown out of the window. I had confided to Gauffecourt what had taken place the day before. "Be firm," he said to me; "if you knew in what terms that rascal talks about you in society, you would blush with anger; his conduct towards you shows unparalleled falseness."

In spite of this, as contempt was the only feeling which it suited me to show towards him, I confined myself to writing him the following letter:

"You cannot think how I admire your generosity. I am so little worthy of it, that I do not advise you to listen to its promptings to the extent of coming to my house in spite of my wishes; for, whenever and under whatever pretext you attempt it, I shall most certainly have you put out of doors at once, however disagreeable such a scene would be for myself. You know very little of me if you

think that I can allow you to honour me with your presence out of pity. Leave me, I beg you, to look after my reputation, and, for heaven's sake, let me no longer owe anything to you. Further, if you wish to gain the title of an honest man in my estimation, let it at least not be *tête-à-tête*, because I cannot give you the lie without ruining you. If I am weak, or good-natured or timid enough to spare you, let that persuade you, if possible, in the future to show greater delicacy, and above all, greater honesty in your conduct; for the public is not always content with rumour, and, unless you take care, it will soon get to know you as well as I do."

On the receipt of this letter, Duclos appears to have made up his mind; he called upon Monsieur de Francueil, and, finding that he was a less constant visitor at Madame d'Épinay's than formerly, he imagined that he had some complaint against her, and that, as he was no longer likely to attempt to investigate his conduct, he might, without running the risk of being given the lie, give any account he pleased of his retreat. He accordingly told M. de Francueil that he had decided to leave off visiting Madame d'Épinay, because he clearly saw that, since Grimm had become the master in her house, old friends, especially persons who told the truth, no longer had the happiness of pleasing; that Madame d'Épinay was becoming unjust, bitter, and capri-

cious, and that, since he had not been able to make her see how dangerous for her this new intimacy was, nothing was left for him except to withdraw, the more so as he could not conceal from himself that she would never forgive him for having unmasked Monsieur Grimm. "But," he added, "as I have done my duty and have always behaved like an honourable man and a true friend, I simply retire and wash my hands of anything that may happen."

Although this language flattered Francueil's passion and jealousy, he had his suspicions of Duclos, and could not endure the idea that Madame d'Épinay had really behaved badly to him. He had sufficient control over himself to give Duclos a vague answer, and to exhibit the greatest possible esteem for my ward. Confounded at having missed his aim, Duclos withdrew, after having begged him not to mention his causes of complaint, out of consideration, as he asserted, for Madame d'Épinay. M. de Francueil called upon me the same day to find out what had taken place, and gave me an account of the visit which he had received; but, being somewhat more sincere with me, he did not conceal from me that he suspected Monsieur Grimm of ruining in Madame d'Épinay's opinion all her old friends. I explained to him the reason which had decided her to forbid Duclos the house, and I assured him so positively that I saw nothing suspicious in her intimacy with Grimm, that, after my explanation, he was tolerably calm and continued to visit her

almost as before. As for Monsieur d'Épinay, he contented himself with asking why he never saw Duclos. Madame d'Épinay replied: "For very good reasons; he is a rascal who has tricked us all." "By heaven," said he, "what a wonderful discovery! have you only found that out to-day? and is that the reason why you refuse to see him? On my honour, if one looked at so closely—he will do you a mischief, be careful." "Ah, Monsieur," I replied, "I despise him too much to fear him." "Ah, good heavens, yes! In short, everyone does as he likes; I wash my hands of it; I have nothing at all to do with it, nothing at all; I will not see him again at my house, but you will not prevent me from being civil to him; I wish to be on good terms with everybody." "You are free to be so,—even with your conscience, if you can."

He kept his word in regard to Duclos, whom he received as usual wherever he met him.

The Chevalier de Valory, as has been seen, was on the point of setting out with his niece to take possession of the property which he had just acquired. In spite of all the precautions which they had taken, the secret could not be sufficiently well kept to prevent some of the necessary preparations for a complete removal becoming known to Mademoiselle d'Ette and arousing her violent suspicions. She spent some days in putting a restraint upon herself, in order to keep a better watch on the Chevalier and his niece; but what she observed was calculated neither to give her any information nor to reassure her.

One night, however, the greater part of which she had spent in a state of great uneasiness, she entered the Chevalier's room; he was asleep; she woke him, sat down upon his bed, and entered upon an explanation with all the violence and fury which inspired her. The Chevalier, after having vainly employed, in order to calm her, all the means which his natural good nature suggested to him, at length gave her to understand, in most definite language, that he was going to separate from her for ever, and to fly from a hell which he could no longer put up with. This confidence, which was not calculated to appease her, redoubled her rage. "Since this is so," she replied, "get out of my house immediately. You were to start in a week; it is rendering you a service to make you start at once. Everything here belongs to me—the lease is in my name. It does not suit me to allow you to remain at my house any longer. Get up, Monsieur, and mind you take nothing away without my permission."

This harangue, pronounced in a tone which hardly admitted of reply, made the Chevalier equally indignant and astonished. "I swear to you," he answered, "that if I were alone here, I would not wait twice to be told to go; but, Mademoiselle, remember that you owe some respect to my niece, and that I will not allow anyone to show a want of it towards her." "Although I strongly suspect your niece," replied Mademoiselle d'Ette, "of being in league with you, and perhaps even of being the cause of your unworthy

conduct, I consent not to put her out of doors before daylight; but, as for you, once again I say get up, pack up your things, and both of you leave the house as soon as she is up."

With these words, she left the Chevalier's room. He got up, packed up his papers and linen, wrote a note to Mademoiselle d'Ette, instructing her to send to him at his brother's house everything she did not want, and then went to his niece's room. He woke her, and told her of what had just taken place. She indignantly said that she would not stay a quarter of an hour in the house of such a fury; that she would get up and leave the house immediately. But, when they reflected that they did not know where to go at so early an hour, they could not help laughing at their position and utter rout. Although it was only seven o'clock, Mademoiselle de Valory begged her uncle to take her to Madame d'Épinay's, and then to go and find some furnished rooms for the four days they still had to remain in Paris; for it was not possible to cut short their stay, since the carriages which were to take them had not yet arrived.

While they were deliberating upon the course which they proposed to take, a letter from Mademoiselle d'Ette was brought to the Chevalier, in which she exhausted all her eloquence to obtain his forgiveness, and to dissaude him from going. This letter contained everything that the most unbridled passion could dictate: love, humility, remorse, threats, revenge, promises, expressions

of affection, nothing was omitted, and the whole tenour of it clearly showed a most disordered brain. Far from producing the effect she expected, the letter so alarmed the Chevalier and his niece, that they left the house with the greatest precipitation. They took nothing with them except Mademoiselle Valory's belongings and the Chevalier's parcel, leaving everything else at the mercy of Mademoiselle d'Ette.

When they reached Madame d'Épinay's house, they asked the servant to call her, and related their adventure. She said that she would not allow them to go into apartments at all, and went and asked her husband to be good enough to let them have a small, unoccupied set of rooms in the house. He consented, and they took up their quarters there.

When Mademoiselle d'Ette found that the Chevalier had left, her fury was indescribable; she broke everthing that she could lay her hands upon; but seeing from the Chevalier's letter, which she found upon her table, that he left her whatever she thought fit to take, she considered it best to keep everything and not to break anything else. She never forgave Madame d'Épinay for having sheltered the Chevalier and his niece; in her opinion, this showed a disgusting want of respect for her; and, in consequence of this opinion, she vowed against her a hatred which has never been given the lie. She even carried her complaints to Madame d'Esclavelles; and, in order to substantiate it better, she was not afraid to disgrace her-

self by openly proclaiming, not only to Madame d'Esclavelles, but everywhere, the life which she had led as the Chevalier's mistress; and, in order to show what she called Madame d'Épinay's ingratitude, she boldly related all the details of the confidential terms on which she had been with her. As soon as I heard of her disgraceful conduct, I went to her house, and, having spoken very firmly to her, and seeing that it produced no effect, I pretended that I had never heard of the majority of the facts which she ventured to affirm; she offered me proofs of them in writing; that was exactly what I wanted. Then I took possession of all the papers which she gave me to read, and put them in my pocket. She wanted to stop me, but I told her that, unless she immediately handed over to me all the papers she might have that related to Francueil and Madame d'Epinay, I would at once obtain an order of arrest, and have her locked up. She proceeded to burst into tears, tore her hair, and finished by giving me all the evidence she had against my ward. I earnestly begged her, when I left, to keep quiet on this point, if she wanted me to do the same by her. All Madame d'Épinay's friends refused to see this schemer again, and I was not at all surprised when I learned, some months later, that she had formed a very intimate connection with Duclos.

Continuation of Madame d'Épinay's Diary.

How dearly I have just paid for the faults which are only due to the weakness of my character! I will conquer it or die in the attempt. During the two months that I have been here, I might have been perfectly happy, but I have done just what was wanted to destroy this happiness; I have presumed too much upon my prudence and good intentions.

We were leading a very happy life, my mother, my children, and myself; the Comtesse d'Houdetot and the Marquis de Saint-Lambert had taken up their quarters with us. M. Grimm gave us all the time during which he was not obliged to be in attendance upon the Duc d'Orléans. M. de Francueil came nearly as often as M. Grimm, and he seemed at first to have no objection to his company. They even shared in perfect harmony the trouble which they were good enough to take about the instruction of my children. When my health, which is daily breaking up, did not allow me to take long walks, I remained with M. Grimm, or with M. Francueil, in whose heart I congratulated myself upon having restored tranquillity. One day he told me that the efforts which he made to overcome the feeling of melancholy which consumed him were inconceivable, and were becoming too much for him. I replied that attempting to conceal our grief invariably increased it, that we ought to know how to be melancholy with our friends, not to leave them

as long as we were comfortable with them, and to leave them when we foresaw that we should be happier elsewhere. "Alas!" he replied, "the truth is that I can neither leave you nor avoid you." These words displeased me, and I told him so. He protested against my harshness. "I ask nothing from you," he said to me; "I make no kind of claim calculated to alarm you. I only claim the rights which you have allowed me to keep, the rights of a friend. You wish me to flatter myself that I am one of your friends, and you impose silence upon me if I venture for a moment to speak to you about my sorrows. I only ask you not to treat me worse than them."

In fact, I do not know all that he said to me, but he assured me so earnestly that even the conversation he had just had with me made him happy, that I thought I might allow myself to listen to him sometimes, but only when he was so terribly melancholy, that some such consolation became necessary to him; and I gave him the promise he asked for. I repeated to Monsieur Grimm the conversation I had had with Francueil; he disapproved of my promise to listen to his complaints. I regarded this disapproval as misplaced harshness on his part; and, as he had distrusted my sincerity and feelings for him during the time when Duclos had so greatly alarmed me in regard to his, I fancied that the petty tyranny which he attempted to exercise was a consequence of his past doubts. Being quite convinced that my intentions were good, I

reassured myself, and regarded as an idle fancy his confident assertion that I should soon have cause to regret my condescension.

However, Monsieur de Francueil, while he dreaded my presence, could no longer do without it. He found excuses without number for conversations with me, and when I endeavoured to avoid opportunities of speaking to him, he fell into such a state of despair that it made my heart bleed. Then I did my utmost to bring him back to a reasonable frame of mind. Sometimes I succeeded; but at other times I was obliged to allow him to avoid M. Grimm's company, and to let him go as soon as he arrived. When I had produced any effect upon Francueil's mind, I informed Monsieur Grimm; but when he was unreasonable, I avoided speaking about it to him, for fear he might advise me to discontinue this consolation, which I considered very harmless, and which, in perfect sincerity, I hoped Francueil would almost immediately no longer need.

My mother observed that Francueil's behaviour and mine were not natural. She became uneasy and informed M. Grimm. "The man has bewitched her," she said. "In the name of the esteem and friendship which you feel for her, Monsieur, point out the truth to her; she has confidence in your opinion. But what is the best thing to do? For, after what that disgraceful creature D'Ette has said, one can do nothing without exposing oneself to danger."

M. Grimm spoke to me as my mother desired;

but with such caution, I might almost say coldness, that I understood that my conduct might be liable to an unfavourable interpretation, and that he was vexed at it, although he said nothing to me; but, either from pride, or from annoyance at having been so ill-judged, I contented myself with telling him, as coldly as he had spoken to me, that I would not neglect his advice. The following day, I declared to M. de Francueil that in future I would have no more private conversation with him, since I had not succeeded as well as I had hoped in my desire to restore his peace of mind. The interview was somewhat stormy; I left it with tears in my eyes, and retired to my room. M. Grimm, having seen me pass, went down to the terrace whence I had come; there he found Francueil, whom I had left in the greatest despair. He passed close to him and saluted him; but Francueil, either because he was absorbed in thought and did not see Grimm at all, or because he really intended to insult him, walked on hastily without returning his salute, and without even appearing to notice it. Annoyed at this behaviour, M. Grimm came up to my room again, and asked me for an explanation. I told him quite simply what had taken place, and how little I had succeeded in calming Francueil. "I am not surprised," he replied; "through your ill-judged pity, you are prolonging his unhappiness indefinitely. You ought, from the very first moment, to have forbidden him to make complaints, and even to have refused to admit him

if he had persisted in making them. I let you go your own way as long as you chose, for misplaced advice might have displeased you; and besides, since we have been in the country, you have not asked for any; but to-day, things have gone so far that they are unendurable, unless it is your intention to make me make up my mind——" "I!" I said eagerly, "can you imagine it?" "But," he rejoined, "it would perhaps be better for everybody. You are making me play a part that is very insipid and very improper for you, Madame, if you will allow me to say so." "You drive me to despair," I added; "do not think of this idea for a moment, but tell me what is to be done." "You must keep calm; and, if you wish for my advice, Madame, I think that, if he again attempts to speak to you, you ought to tell him firmly that he must no longer think of talking to you about what you no longer wish to hear; tell him that your friendship for him has led you to behave with a condescension which his own conduct causes you to regret, and that it now rests with him to seek the means which he considers most efficacious for his recovery; but that, for the future, he must not take you into account at all, and that, in order to cut short the remarks which people are certain to make, you advise him to go away. You can soften this decision by assuring him of the feelings with which you ought, and will doubtless continue to regard him; that, Madame," said M. Grimm very coldly, "is what the respect you owe to yourself requires."

His manner chilled me; I felt the necessity of the advice which he gave me, but I could have wished that he had given it more pleasantly; then I should have followed it without hesitation. Two things, however, inclined me to reject it; in the first place, the cold and authoritative tone, which alarmed me, and made me afraid of allowing myself to be domineered over again, and of finding myself in the position of submitting my will to the absolute authority of a fresh tyrant, instead of reconciling it with the feelings of a friend; but, on the other hand, I was even more afraid that it might be supposed that my friendship for M. Grimm was the cause of the rupture, if Francueil's visits to my house were seen to be suddenly discontinued.

Full of this alarm, which greatly influenced my conduct, I replied: "What you say is, I admit, a sure means of getting rid of Francueil, but the result will be a scandal which I ought, at any price, to avoid." "No doubt," he said; "but you must not avoid it at the expense of your reputation, and, above all, of what you owe to yourself." "Agreed; but when people see his despair, it will be supposed that I have deserted him, and that would be a real wrong after ten years' intimacy." "Has he not behaved for two years as a man who no longer had any kind of liking for you?" "That is true; but, seeing his present condition, how do you think that anyone would guess how he had treated me?" "His behaviour is only too well known, Madame, thanks to your perfidious friends, who, thank God! have

never ceased, up to the present moment, to entertain the public with the secrets you have confided to them, and with those which they falsely and spitefully imagine you may have confided to them." This avowal, far from reassuring me, ended by disturbing me. "You ought no longer to allow yourself to talk with M. de Francueil," added M. Grimm, "except to represent to him strongly that he is unpardonably wanting in respect to you, by behaving in a manner calculated to make people imagine you are guilty of offences which he knows very well that you have not committed. Once again, it is necessary to wait and see what he is going to do, and whether it is against me that he bears ill-will. In any case, I do not think that you ought to allow him to behave towards me as he is doing, for, if it continues, I must refuse to see him; and, if it were not for the respect which I owe you, and the fear of compromising you, I should not wait any longer without demanding an explanation from him."

I was only too afraid that, in reality, Francueil's intention was to seek a quarrel with M. Grimm. Some expressions he had let slip had made me suspect this, and I shuddered at the very first word M. Grimm said to me about what had just taken place between them. "You are right," I said to him eagerly. "I will speak to him about it at once, so as to make him alter his behaviour." "What makes you flatter yourself now that you can do it? A moment ago you

despaired of it." "I despaired of doing so without exposing myself to the risk of a scandal which I no longer fear since you are exposed to it." "Do you not see that this is not the moment to speak to him? You can only know through me the details of the want of courtesy which he has shown me. Let us wait till to-morrow, unless he gives you an opportunity of seeing for yourself."

I pretended to yield, in order to lose no more time for what I proposed to do. I was greatly alarmed; I was afraid that M. Grimm might think himself compelled to require satisfaction for the insult he had just received; his opposition to my desire to speak at once to Francueil appeared to me to be a proof of it; and, as I felt that he would keep a sufficiently close watch upon me to prevent me saying anything to him, I resolved to write Francueil a long letter, in which I told him that I had seen from my window how he had just treated M. Grimm. I declared that I was exceedingly vexed at it, since, under the circumstances, it became a personal insult to myself. I reviewed, with warmth, all his past conduct; I asked him by what right he ventured to disturb my peace of mind at the present time, when my indulgence had led me to put up with his unreasonableness for the last five months, whereas it ought not to have engaged my attention for even a quarter of an hour. I ended by demanding that he should either assure M. Grimm in my presence that he had not seen him, or that he should go

away until he had recovered his senses, and was in a condition to present himself to me without failing in the respect which was due from him to me, either personally or in the person of my friends. I declared to him that, if he did not strictly follow out my instructions, he would for ever lose the esteem and friendship which it would have been very pleasant for me to be able to retain for him. I told him, further, that it was extremely repugnant to me to act with such severity, because he was and always would be dear to me, unless he obliged me to efface his image entirely from my heart.

It was necessary to find an opportunity to give him this letter without M. Grimm's knowledge. He might have approved of it at any other time; but now I felt, or, at least, I thought, that he was certain to forbid me to do anything at all, even though he might approve of it in the bottom of his heart. Completely occupied with my fears and the remedy which I believed I was applying to them, I tried to find means to hand him my letter without being observed; I trembled as if I had committed a bad action, and I was as awkward as was to be expected, considering my frame of mind. Unfortunately, M. Grimm noticed me secretly giving a paper to Francueil; it was about nine o'clock in the evening, there was a large number of visitors, and some music was going on; he suddenly assumed a cold and ironical air which drove me to despair; he no doubt thought that he had been deceived. I tried to

say a few words to him after supper, but he turned his back upon me without answering. Francueil, on his part, had read my letter, and immediately after supper withdrew to his room, on the pretext that he had some letters to write. Grimm then thought that I had made an appointment with him; and, pretending to trouble little about it, said to me carelessly that he had received some letters which summoned him to Paris early on the following morning; luckily there was no necessity for it.

Despair took possession of me to such an extent that, if at this cruel moment I did nothing to compromise myself, it was entirely due to chance and my lucky star. However, I had no doubt that the night would bring about the most tragic catastrophe. I spent the time standing up in my room in a condition of most violent excitement; I wrote to Monsieur Grimm, I wrote to Francueil, I burned my letters almost as soon as they were written. The least noise froze my senses, and as Monsieur Grimm and Francueil hardly slept any more than I did, and their rooms were not far from mine, I was kept in a state of perpetual alarm by the almost constant movement which I heard there.

About five o'clock, worn out by fatigue and mental distress, as everything seemed quiet in the house, I threw myself on my bed to take a little rest. I did not wake till nine o'clock. As I was usually a much earlier riser, and people always judge according to the idea which has

struck them, Monsieur Grimm concluded from it that all that was taking place around me, and, above all, his indifference, had but little effect upon me; and for this reason he did not show himself in my room until all the guests had assembled for breakfast. I was utterly astonished to hear that Monsieur de Francueil had left at six o'clock. But Monsieur Grimm believed that he had gone away by my orders, and that my surprise was only pretended. My first impulse was to fear that something had taken place between them, and I grew pale and red by turns.

However, I was somewhat reassured on seeing the coolness of Monsieur Grimm, who put quite a different interpretation upon the conflicting emotions which agitated me. He retired to dress before any of the others, so that it was impossible for me to say a single word to him. Then, seeing clearly that he was avoiding me, I wrote him a line, begging him not to go or to condemn me unheard; and I went to the door of his room myself to give him the note. As his man was there he could not refuse it; but he took it very gravely and laid it upon the mantelpiece, thanking me as if for something that was unnecessary, and the contents of which he knew by heart. I whispered to him: "Monsieur, you are carrying harshness and injustice too far. It is for the last time that I ask you to hear me. If you still refuse me, I am courageous, and I am not guilty. I have more trouble than I can endure. I can no longer answer for myself."

At that time I was in that state of dejection in which one ceases to feel anything, and everything that occurs is a matter of indifference. In this condition I went back to my room, where I remained in a kind of prostration.

For some time past, the indifferent state of my health had obliged me to take my meals in my room by myself, and, when there was company, I did not show myself until five o'clock in the afternoon. The morning passed without my hearing anything of M. Grimm, and he came to dinner without having been to see me. At three o'clock, before they had left the table, a special messenger came from Francueil with a large parcel and a little box. He was shown up to my room. I took the parcel, and, as I had neither the strength nor the inclination to open it, I informed him that I was unwell, and that, if he wanted an answer, I would give him one tomorrow. He also brought a letter for my husband, which contained an adequate excuse for his hasty departure.

When dinner was over, M. Grimm at length came up to my room alone. I thought that curiosity had more to do with his visit than sympathy. I had just opened the box and the parcel; they contained all my letters and my likeness, which Francueil returned, together with a letter twelve pages long, in which all that frenzy, repentance, despair, and regret could suggest was depicted. He bade me an eternal farewell, and informed me that he intended to leave for his estate the following day.

I was overcome with grief when I thought of his terrible condition, and I confess that the comparison of what he was suffering for my sake with M. Grimm's harshness was not favourable to the latter. He was struck by my dejection, from what he told me afterwards, and by the despair which was depicted upon my countenance. As soon as he entered the room, "Madame," said he, "I have come to know what you have to say to me." I looked at him with dimmed eyes, without uttering a word. He was alarmed. "I do not know," he continued, "why you wish to prevent me from leaving. With a little more sincerity, we should all be less to be pitied; I cannot endure the idea of causing you unhappiness, or of being the cause——" "My friend," I said to him, "I do not find that you are at all what I thought you to be; you are harsh and tyrannical; it seems to me that you are pushing the part of a friend beyond the limits prescribed by indulgence and kindness." "I have had a presentiment, Madame, that the firmness, the impulsiveness of a character like mine would ill agree with the weakness of yours. I cannot be of service to my friends except in my own way——" "Ah, Monsieur, there is no doubt that the good you do to others costs them a very heavy price!" "I am aware of it, but I have warned you of it. It is you who have asked my advice; you know how little eagerness I showed to give it, but it does not suit me that anyone should ask for it only in order to despise it; I say again, Madame, perhaps you

think more of your old intimacies than you yourself imagine——" "Look," I exclaimed, interrupting him and handing him Francueil's letter; "see how unjust your suspicions are, and how cruelly you are behaving!" He read the letter without saying a word. However, I must do him the justice to admit that, if he was touched by my condition, he showed himself even more affected by the thought of the harshness he had shown towards me, when I confessed the indiscretion I had committed without his knowledge. I admitted that he might have mistaken my conduct, but I found no less difficulty in forgetting his harshness, in spite of all the regret for it which he manifested, and all his efforts to make amends for it. This incident has left in my heart such lasting traces of despair, that I believe I shall feel its effects all my life, and although at present I am calm, I am conscious of a feeling of melancholy which it is impossible to overcome.

Two days afterwards, I heard that Francueil had left for Chenonceaux, where he had expressed his intention of spending six months.

Continuation of the Diary.

How often, during the last few days, have I had reason to reflect upon the disagreeable consequences, and even misfortunes, which may result from rash behaviour! The loss of the confidence and esteem of my friend; an appearance of double-dealing, falsehood, and dishonesty attach-

ing to my conduct; the neglect of my children's education; a spirit of constraint and distrust aroused in the minds of all about me; my mother uneasy and inquisitive, equally afraid to ask questions, gain information, or hold her tongue; my health destroyed by trouble, alarm, and grief; the life and honour of two men in danger! Oh, my fellow-women! may you learn from my example that ill-directed pity is the most cruel and the most dangerous of all weaknesses!

My husband is the only person who, amidst all the shackles that I have imposed upon myself, has not shown any signs of observing my distress. The Comtesse d'Houdetot and Saint-Lambert are too much occupied with themselves, and are too experienced to see what it is not told them. Alas! can this explanation of their silence and their unaltered behaviour be any satisfaction to me? I feel humiliated by it, and I swear that I will never again act except after mature consideration, and in accordance with the advice of M. Grimm, to whom I render, tardily, but once and for all, the justice which is due to him.

CHAPTER XIV (1755-1756).

It may be imagined that Duclos was not a man to allow himself to be driven from Madame d'Épinay's door without making an attempt to revenge himself, either upon her or upon M. Grimm, to whose influence he attributed her courage in ridding herself of his presence and in shaking off the authority which he had acquired over her. But it was necessary for him to do so without compromising himself, and to destroy both his enemies at the same time, if it were possible. Such was the sublime plan which he had conceived; happily, he lacked the coolness, prudence, and cleverness necessary for carrying out his designs.

We have seen that, immediately after his dismissal, he had attempted to bring about a quarrel between Madame d'Épinay and M. Grimm. In consequence of the complaints which he made to M. de Francueil, he hoped that their rupture would cause a scandal, and that the public would so openly blame M. Grimm for it, that Madame d'Épinay would be obliged to send him away, if his respect for her did not decide him to retire of his own accord. This was the explanation of the language he adopted, and of the affected manner in which he held up to admiration in society

M. Grimm's respectful attentions to Madame d'Épinay. Now, if his first plan with Francueil had succeeded, the more highly he spoke of Grimm and the more sympathy he showed for Madame d'Épinay, the more he imposed upon him the necessity of withdrawing of his own accord, at a time when he was injuring her reputation. In the opposite event, there remained to him the resource of speaking ill of Madame d'Épinay, and of covering Grimm with ridicule in consequence of the respectful attachment for her which he attributed to him. But M. de Francueil attached little credit to what Duclos said, and, far from complaining, he returned with far greater calmness to Madame d'Épinay's society.

Then Duclos began to act secretly. He continued to praise Grimm loudly and openly, and in a whisper to insinuate all the harm he could of Madame d'Épinay. He went to Diderot, M. Grimm's intimate friend. At first he spoke casually of Madame d'Épinay, and afterwards told him confidentially that his friend was in love with her; he added that he was very glad of it, because Madame d'Épinay was a very nice mistress to have, and one to whom, unless a man was a fool, he never ran the risk of becoming seriously attached. At last, by degrees, he came to make Diderot the recipient of confidences which were utterly false and disgraceful, and which, luckily, it was perfectly easy to disprove.

Diderot, having no reason to doubt Duclos'

sincerity, and ignorant that he had just been dismissed from the house of a person whom he was abusing so scandalously, was so alarmed at the risk his friend Grimm was running with such a woman, that he resolved to do his utmost to break off the connection. He knew that Grimm was incapable of a moderate attachment. He believed that he was lost, and, a few days afterwards, he went one morning to see him. It is from M. Diderot that I have learned these details. The following is the conversation which took place between them. I set it down here exactly as M. Diderot gave it to me in writing:

"When I had settled myself at Grimm's fireside, I did not know how to manage to bring up the subject which I wanted to discuss. 'If he is really in love,' I said to myself, 'I am going to deal him a mortal blow. No matter; I must speak. It would be more cruel on my part to hold my tongue.' I first began to gossip about women in general, their good and bad qualities, and the time they cause a man of letters to waste. At this remark he voluntarily spoke to me of the warmth of affection with which Mademoiselle Fel had inspired him. 'I never left her,' he said to me, 'without being conscious of a feeling of exaltation, and in the frame of mind which makes a man feel capable of saying or doing great and noble things. Oh, my friend! what have I become since then? My heart is dead, I am no longer myself; I am in a state of utter torpor, from which I can only extricate myself by continued efforts and artifices. I am incapable

of writing a line. I no longer recognise myself.' 'In fact,' I said to him, 'this creature has done you a great deal of harm. When I think of the condition in which I have seen you, for more than two months hovering between life and death, reason and delirium! What harshness, what haughtiness on her part! What intoxication, what self-abandonment on yours! Whence I conclude, my friend, that, for a sensible man, it is of some importance to consider to whom he is intrusting his happiness.' 'I agree,' he said. 'It is very easy,' I added, 'to be conscious of the necessity of a rule of conduct, but very difficult to conform to it. For instance, there is no one who does not cry out against the unjust, the absurd, the senseless manner in which marriages are arranged; and yet the same people, if they have a daughter, a niece, or a son to dispose of in marriage, act in the same manner, and consider the custom a very wise one. And other connections? is any more common sense shown in them?' 'No, decidedly not.' 'We meet a woman in society, or are introduced by a friend. She appears amiable to us; we go there again. She appears still more amiable, her presence becomes necessary, her image follows us everywhere, and there you have a passion inspired and declared. It lasts as long as it can, but always ends in the sorrow of one or the other.' 'That is true.'

"'But, my friend, you admit everything, and that is just what proves the truth of my first

proposition.' 'Which asserts?' 'Which asserts that nothing is easier than to know good advice, and nothing harder than to follow it.' 'And what reasons can you have for applying this maxim to me?' 'What reasons? tell me, if you please: Mademoiselle Fel no longer has any influence over you?' 'No, and never will have for the rest of her life. You ought to know me, my friend; you know how an injury irritates me. I can endure much and suffer much, but there are some injuries the recollection of which can never be effaced.' 'And if she returned to you?' 'If she returned? it is not only a question of loving; one must also feel esteem.' 'Such words are prompted by reason, not by the heart. Joking apart, I believe you are safe in that quarter; but, my friend, this adventure ought to have made you prudent. If, perchance, you found—if you found that you had any liking, it would be necessary—I think that you would examine it closely.' 'That is certainly my intention.' 'That is the answer of a man who might have already examined.' 'Who has told you that?' 'I say so because you avow all that it would be prudent to do, and because I believe you to be on the point of committing an act of foolishness, which will once again have a paramount influence upon your happiness.' 'And what foolishness, if you please?' 'Has not Rousseau introduced you to Madame d'Épinay?' 'Yes.' 'Have you not fought a duel for her?' 'For her sake, no; about her, perhaps.' 'Let us not argue about terms. Any-

how, do you not see her more constantly than it suits, if not Rousseau, at least others?' 'That may be.' 'If I am to believe Duclos, who, I believe, does not like it any more than Rousseau and many others, you are not far from conceiving a passion for each other.' 'And even if that should be true, my friend, although I neither admit nor deny it?' 'Even if it should be? Well, you would be preparing for yourself future trouble, of which I think you would have no right to complain.' 'And the reason, if you please?' 'Well, before telling you it would be convenient to know what kind of feeling you would entertain for and expect in return from Madame d'Épinay, or any other woman you please. If all this is merely a matter of amusement, a matter that concerns the senses, provided it be clearly explained, I see little objection to it.' 'Intimacies of that kind are not to my taste, I abominate that kind of connection; either from pride or delicacy, I desire to be loved from choice, from preference, and exclusively. I would sacrifice everything to her whom I love without a blush, and I would have her accept nothing from me except what she was ready to return. I care very little for sensual gratification, when it is separated from feelings of confidence and esteem; this insipid madness appeals neither to my mind nor to my heart. I claim to find in her who may intrust her happiness to me the certainty of my own, whatever event happens to me, I wish her thoughts to be occupied with it when away from me, as mine

will be with her; and, finally, I desire that it shall be respect and esteem for ourselves which shall make us superior to the annoyance and vexations which are inevitable when people defy a prejudice which is generally admitted in the society in which they live. That, my friend, is how I can be happy, and how it suits me to be so.' 'And that is the happiness you would promise yourself with Madame d'Épinay?' 'Certainly.' 'And you would believe her well adapted to enjoy it and to procure it?' 'More so than any woman I have ever known,' replied Grimm firmly.

"'Ah, my friend,' I said to him, 'you are lost! The die is cast; you are no longer able to reflect, to listen; let us end the discussion. I would rather hold my tongue than continue a conversation which would make you wretched and would do no good.'

"He began to laugh; and his laughter made me feel miserable. 'No, no,' he said; 'do not be afraid; you can tell me anything you like, without grieving me.' 'Well,' I said to him, 'let us leave Madame d'Épinay alone, and talk of a woman generally. Let us see what are the qualities you would require her to have in order to assure the happiness of a man like yourself? You want intellect, solid and agreeable, but susceptible to culture and reflection; for she must be able to talk of something else besides pompons, intrigues, and trinkets?' 'Undoubtedly.' 'You want frankness, sincerity, and a rather larger proportion than usual of reason and philosophy?'

'That is certain.' 'No secrecy, no fondness for intrigue; falseness is your abhorrence?' 'Assuredly.' 'Before all, she must be prudent and entirely free from coquetry; she must be beyond the reach of suspicion.' 'Certainly.' 'For it is not sufficient not to be a dupe; our friends, and even those as to whom we are indifferent, must not be able to entertain any doubt injurious to our reputation.' 'You are right.' 'She must be gentle, complaisant, and not at all imperious.' I do not know everything else that I said to him.

"When I had finished my list, I held my tongue and looked at him silently, and, to tell the truth, with pity. He embraced me, laughing, and said: 'Come, my friend, courage; let us apply your requirements.'

"His coolness grieved and embarrassed me. 'But,' I said to him, 'I have not the honour of being acquainted with Madame d'Épinay; I have no personal reason for either loving or hating her, but I am acquainted with men of sense who know her, and know her well.' 'Better than I do?' 'I do not know; but they are her friends, and they do not express themselves differently from a crowd of unimportant persons.' 'My friend,' replied Grimm, 'friends, or those who call themselves such, are often very spiteful, and this public, which you have had the delicacy to present to me as a crowd of unimportant persons, is nearly always a fool.' 'That is to say,' I rejoined impatiently, 'that you sincerely believe that Madame d'Épinay is neither false, nor a coquette, nor a common woman'?

'Decidedly.' 'She is full of reason, sense, and philosophy?' 'Much more than one believes, and than she herself believes.' 'There is no affectation, no pretentiousness about her?' 'None.' 'No weakness, no subterfuge; in fact, she has not a fault?' 'She is frank, simple, and truthful. She has an honest heart.' 'She is, no doubt, possessed of nerve, courage, and firmness?' 'To a sufficient extent to be able to acquire more.' 'She is not spiteful?' 'Far, very far from it.' 'To judge from what you say, my friend, she is perfect.' 'I do not say that.' 'You need only add that she has had no lovers before you, and will have none.' 'If she loves me, I shall be the first.'

"This answer, pronounced in a tone which I cannot describe, so overwhelmed me that I could not utter a single word. I relapsed into silence; I saw that Grimm was lost; I became uneasy, pensive and sorrowful. I attempted to speak of some other subject; it was impossible. Grimm felt that I had more precise information which I refused to give him; he came to me and earnestly pressed me to speak. 'No doubt,' I said to him, 'I know certain things, but they have been told me in confidence.' 'In confidence! by Duclos, perhaps, who of course only invented them and told them to you, in order that you might come in all haste to repeat them to me.' 'That may be; but what harm would there be in my being more discreet than he imagines me to be?' 'The harm of keeping his secret for a rascal who does not ask you to do so, and of imperilling the

happiness of your friend, if it happened, by chance, that a Duclos had told you the truth. But, my friend, do you believe that Duclos or the public knows of more errors and follies of Madame d'Épinay than she knows herself? Well, she has told me them all, and I would stake my life that, if what this Duclos has confided to you is true, I know it, and that, if I do not know it, it is false. In the first case, you will teach me nothing; in the second, you will unmask a calumniator; you will learn to know this Duclos, whose roughness of manner and pretended moral austerity impose upon so many people, and you will lose the bad opinion which you have conceived of an honourable and estimable woman, who does not deserve to hold so low a place in the opinion of a just man such as you are.' 'I admit,' I said to Grimm, 'that I owe more to you, who are my heart's friend, than to all the Rousseaus and Duclos in the world; but what I have heard of Madame d'Épinay, from Duclos' confidences, is not one of those things which women can talk about!' 'What is it then?'

"I still hesitated to reply, and kept silence. 'Diderot,' he said to me all at once, 'you do not see what you are doing; out of consideration for rascals, who have been shameless enough not to ask you to hold your tongue, you are going to do Madame d'Épinay and myself a fearful injury. I will lead her back to the subject of her general confession; and as I shall certainly find nothing

more in it than what I know already, you are going to torture me, to torture her; she has an affectionate regard for my peace of mind; she will come in her turn and summon you to speak; she will send for Duclos——' 'I do not fear Duclos; of whatever shamelessness I may suspect him, he will not deny it. And as for Madame d'Épinay, I declare that I would rather have an explanation with her than with anyone else.' 'That may be so, but that is useless. It is I who ask you what you have been told—I who ask you in the name of the friendship which exists between us and will never come to an end, even though you should be obstinate enough to keep silence; for I cannot break off with my friends for trifles.' 'But, my friend, you are happy, you love and are loved, you esteem and are esteemed; what more do you need?' 'A further proof that Madame d'Épinay is not an ordinary woman.' 'And if she were proved one of those who were not really false in an ordinary and common degree?' 'Well, you would be exactly accomplishing your object in making me acquainted with her character, and, as you have proposed to yourself, you would anticipate all the evils which you fear will result for me from an intimate connection with her.' 'You wish me to speak, then?' 'Yes, I wish it.' 'You shall be satisfied. Well, my friend, learn that Madame d'Épinay betrayed you on the very day she had selected to make you happy.' 'How so?' 'She wrote to you to give you a meeting at her house;

is it not so?' 'Go on.' 'You answered her in a very affectionate note?' 'Very affectionate.' 'Duclos arrived. Intoxicated as she was with delight, she confided to him the secret of her happiness, and begged him to go and leave her at liberty. Duclos, foreseeing disastrous results from this intimacy, in consequence of Madame d'Épinay's natural fickleness, and the idea that he has conceived of you, whom he does not suspect of allowing yourself to be played with, frightened her by pointing out the risk she ran in abandoning herself to this passing fancy, and urged her to break it off, since she was not satisfied and there was still time for it. She yielded to his arguments, or pretended to do so, and made him happy. He then departed, and left her to do just as she pleased in regard to you. That, my friend, is all that you wanted to know.'

"To my great astonishment, Grimm at first smiled at this story; then he showed profound indignation, as was only right, since it was absolutely false. 'And when,' said he to me, 'did Duclos invent this pretty slander?' 'About a fortnight ago. I have tried to find you several times since, but have been unable to do so.' 'And what did Rousseau tell you?' 'He does not positively affirm facts; but, on my honour, he does not seem to have any better opinion of her. It is impossible, after what I have heard from these two authorities, for me to think as highly of Madame d'Épinay as you would like me to do.' 'I admit,' said Grimm, 'that, as

you did not suspect Duclos' good faith, and, like everyone else, were the dupe of his pretended honesty, you had no reason to suspect his rascality. Let me tell you, my friend, that, more than six weeks ago, Madame d'Épinay dismissed him from her house; that he has tried to ruin me in her estimation by the most infamous calumnies; that he has sought every means of injuring her since he has been driven away. Let me tell you, further, that I have never written her an affectionate letter, that she has never written me one.' 'I have seen one.' 'What!' 'I have seen one in her handwriting intended for you; she gave it up to Duclos.' 'How do you know that it is her handwriting? Duclos is capable of anything.' 'I have seen several of her letters to Rousseau and Duclos: I cannot possibly be mistaken.' 'What, then, did this letter say?' 'On my honour—Wait. I believe it was about the death of the Comte de Frièse.'"

The reader will remember what this letter was, of which Duclos had obtained possession. Grimm explained to Diderot the manner in which it had remained in his hands. As this explanation was rather long, I have omitted it, and resume the thread of their conversation.

"'No, my friend,' continued M. Grimm, 'I have never in my life seen so cunning a rascal

as Duclos. I do not know whither my intimacy with Madame d'Épinay will lead me; but, up to the present moment, I must ask you to look upon me as nothing more than her friend. What Duclos says is false in all points; she has never been capable of writing to me this pretended letter, which was sacrificed to Duclos, and why should he have shown you a letter which he had cunningly stolen, if others had been confided to him? But, good heavens! to what do not women expose themselves by their rash and ill-considered behaviour, by their madness for being praised! Owing to the unhappy facilities which there are for chattering in this accursed country, people allow the first comer who extols their virtues and talents to assume authority over them; and Madame d'Épinay, in particular, is guilty of an offence for which I cannot forgive her, namely, the rapidity with which she allows new acquaintances to gain a footing with her, without giving herself the trouble to examine their moral characters. She submits her opinions to them, she distrusts no one but herself; and, if she had shown Duclos and many others that she despised and resented their first impertinences, she would not be exposed to-day to their infamous calumnies. Do you not see, Diderot, that everything that he has told you bears the stamp of untruth and duplicity? One or two confidences of this kind, and there is an honest woman irretrievably lost! Who takes sufficient interest in her to verify the facts? Who will be sufficiently just to estimate,

after an untruth has been exposed, the value which ought to be attached to what remains, which is at times ambiguous, and which it is impossible to clear up? I will say nothing of all this to Madame d'Epinay; she is ill, she is weak, the least grief might produce fatal results; and, on my honour, I love and esteem her too much to point out to her coldly the dangers to which her ill-considered behaviour exposes her.'"

Diderot told me that he left Grimm convinced that Duclos was a rascal, but not so strongly convinced that Madame d'Epinay was as honourable a woman as his friend declared.

Duclos, finding no change in regard to Madame d'Épinay, and being unable to hide from himself that, in consequence of the ill-success of his intrigues, he was unmasked in the eyes of all those whom he desired to injure, resolved to remain silent and to wait for an opportunity of dealing more decis ve blows. He let no chance escape him of running down Madame d'Épinay in public. And it is to him that she owes, in great part, the prejudice which many persons have retained towards her for far too long.

Continuation of the Diary.

I saw Desmahis yesterday for the first time for a year. He spent part of the afternoon with me. I found him melancholy, uneasy, and quite altered. I think he is a complete victim to hypochondria. I had several visitors; some of my

friends having come up to me to speak to me, Desmahis approached in his turn, and said to me: "Confess, Madame, that these gentlemen find me unrecognisable, and that they have told you so." "Ah, good heaven!" I replied; "I swear that they have not spoken to me about you." He did not venture to persist in his assertion; but I believe, from the attitude he afterwards adopted, that he suspected me of stating what was not true.

I pity him, but I am quite differently affected by the melancholy which has for some time taken possession of Rousseau. He is unhappy, and he himself seems to be ignorant of the cause. He is discontented, Paris wearies him, his friends are more frequently a burden than a pleasure to him; everything that he sees, everything that he hears, disgusts him and makes him take a dislike to his fellows. I advised him to travel. He answered that health and money were wanted to follow this advice, and that he had neither the one nor the other. "No," he added, "my native land or the country, that is what I want, but I have not yet made up my mind. You do not know that it is often a sacrifice beyond human strength to leave for ever even things which sometimes displease us; in the first place, I do not want to be taken notice of; that is one of the greatest blessings in this world, and one which my friends, or those who call themselves such, are mad to prevent me from enjoying." "I understand," I said to him, "that that is very

difficult for them, and, as for myself, I do not promise you to succeed in affording you this satisfaction."

Rousseau is just leaving me. His mind is perplexed. Mine is equally so, both as regards the advice which he asks from me, and that which it is proper to give him. He has received some letters earnestly pressing him to return to his own country to live. He asked me what course he ought to pursue. "I neither desire, nor is it possible for me to remain in Paris; I am too unhappy there. I am quite ready to pay a visit to my republic for a few months, but, according to the proposals which have been made to me, it is a question of settling there, and, if I accept, I shall be unable to avoid remaining there. I have acquaintances there, but not a single intimate friend. These people hardly know me at all, and they write to me as if I were their brother; I know that that is the advantage of a republican spirit; but I distrust such warm friends; there is some object in all this. On the other hand, my heart is moved at the thought that my country desires my presence; but how can I leave Grimm, Diderot, and yourself? Ah, my kind friend, how worried I am!"

"Could you not," I said to him, "without making any definite promise, try a few months' stay?" "No; the offers which have been made to me are of such a nature that they must be accepted or refused at once, and irrevocably. And even if I were to go for a few months

without any other object, what should I do about Thérèse and her mother here, and my rent? I cannot provide for so many expenses. If I get rid of my room, and take away my women-folk, what am I to do with them? And where am I to go if I am not comfortable at Geneva?" "It is hardly possible, my friend, to make up your mind in two hours upon so serious a matter. Give yourself time to think over it. I will think over it too, and we will see."

He is offered a post as librarian, and, on this pretext, an income of 1,200 livres. I do not know whether he sees what is behind this arrangement; anyhow, he has said nothing to me about it. It is clear, however, that this post is only a pretext to make an opening for him, for Gauffecourt has often told me that honour and repute are the only advantages to be derived from places of this kind, to which there is a salary of only 100 crowns attached. Thus, they are only given to persons who possess a respectable competency, to prevent anyone seeking them from considerations of self-interest. He says that they are filled by distinguished men, real *savants*. In this respect no one can be better fitted for one than Rousseau.

Some distance from La Chevrette, at the entrance to the forest, there is a little house which is called the Hermitage, belonging to M. d'Épinay. I will offer it to Rousseau to live in. I will have it got ready in the manner best suited to his mode of life, and I will be careful not to tell him that

without any other object, what should I do about Thérèse and her mother here, and my rent? I cannot provide for so many expenses. If I get rid of my room, and take away my women-folk, what am I to do with them? And where am I to go if I am not comfortable at Geneva?" "It is hardly possible, my friend, to make up your mind in two hours upon so serious a matter. Give yourself time to think over it. I will think over it too, and we will see."

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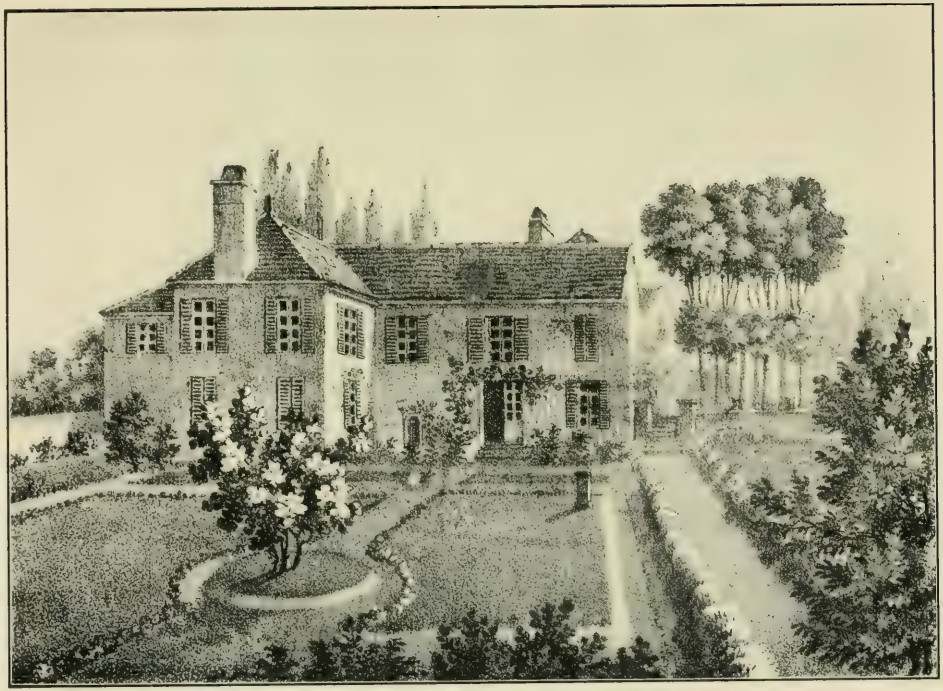
The Hermitage



this expense has been incurred for him. He has never been there; he will believe that this house has always been as he first sees it. I will ask M. d'Épinay to be good enough to let me set some men to work upon it.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

MY DEAR ROUSSEAU,—I have considered the reasons which incline you to accept the offer which has been made to you, and those which would be likely to lead you to decline it. If you go to Geneva, you say, what is to be done with Madame and Mademoiselle le Vasseur? Nothing is easier than to remove this difficulty. I will take charge of them until you have seen whether you can accustom yourself to Geneva, and make up your mind to settle there. It does not become me to determine your course of action in any way. I should perhaps be too one-sided in my advice and decisions. I only wish to remove obstacles; it will then rest with you to make up your mind. If you decide to refuse the offer, you have told me that you must leave Paris all the same, because you cannot endure to remain there. If this is the case, I have a little house at your service. You have often heard me speak of the Hermitage at the entrance of the forest of Montmorenci; there is a most beautiful view from it. There are five rooms, a kitchen, a cellar, a kitchen-garden an acre in extent, a spring of running water, and the forest for a garden. You are at

liberty, my good friend, to make this house your own, if you decide to remain in France.

I further remember that you told me that, if you had an income of a hundred pistoles, you would not go elsewhere. You are, I hope, convinced that it would be a great pleasure to me to contribute to your comfort. I had long ago intended to try and find the means of procuring you this income, without knowing that your desires were limited to that. Here is my proposal: Let me add to the sale of your last work the amount you need to make up your hundred pistoles; I will make any arrangements you please. In this manner, this service is reduced to such small proportions, that you cannot make any objection to the proposal. I have other suggestions to make as to your manner of living at the Hermitage, but the details are too long to be put into writing. In short, my good friend, reflect, calculate, and be sure that my only desire is to do that which will best ensure your happiness. I am fully conscious of the value of your friendship, and the pleasure I derive from your society; but I think that we ought to love our friends for themselves before everything.

ROUSSEAU'S *reply to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

There is little chance of my coming to an arrangement with M. Tronchin, and your friendship for me interposes an obstacle which appears to me harder than ever to overcome. But you have consulted your heart more than your pocket or

my disposition in the arrangement which you propose to me; this offer has chilled my heart. How ill you understand your interests in wishing to make a valet of a friend, and how little you understand my character if you think that such arguments can persuade me! I am not at all anxious either to live or to die; but the uncertainty which cruelly disturbs me is, what course am I to adopt, during the remainder of the time that I have to live, which will assure me the most complete independence. After having done everything with this object, I have not been able to find it at Paris. I am seeking it with greater zeal than ever, and what has tormented me cruelly for more than a year is, that I am unable to find out where I shall find it most assured. However, the greatest probabilities are in favour of my country; but I confess to you that I should find it in a more agreeable form near you. The violent perplexity from which I am suffering cannot last much longer; my mind will be made up in seven or eight days; but rest assured that I shall not be influenced by reasons of self-interest, because I have never feared that I shall want for bread, and, at the worst, I know how to do without it.

However, I cannot refuse to listen to what you have to say to me, provided you remember that I am not to be bought, and that my feelings, which are now above all the price which one can put upon them, would soon be below that which one may have put upon them. Let us, therefore, both forget that this point has ever been mentioned.

As for what concerns you personally, I do not doubt that your heart is sensible of the value of friendship, but I have reason to believe that yours is more necessary to me than mine is to you, for you have compensations which I lack and which I have renounced for ever.

I beg you will be kind enough to tell M. Linant that he may go to M. Diderot, rue Taranne, opposite the rue Saint-Benoît, and get the subscription and the volumes which he wanted to have, and which he will find quite ready. If he wants to see M. Diderot, he must go before ten o'clock in the morning. Good-bye! Madame. There is still another book to sell. Send me my opera.

Note from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

At first your letter made me laugh; it seemed to me so utterly foolish, but, afterwards, it made me feel sorry for you. You must have a very perverted mind to be annoyed at proposals dictated by a friendship which ought to be well known to you, and to suppose that I am actuated by the foolish pride of wishing to create dependents for myself. Neither do I know what are the compensations you find in my lot, with the exception of friendship.

I do not advise you to make up your mind immediately, for you do not appear to me to be capable of judging sensibly of what may be suitable for you. Good-bye! my dear Rousseau.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I hasten to write you a few lines, because I cannot endure that you should think me annoyed, or that you should misunderstand my expressions.

I only used the word "valet" in reference to the state of humiliation into which the abandonment of my principles would necessarily throw my soul; I thought that we understood each other better than we do. Is it necessary for two people, who think and feel as you and I, to enter into explanations about such things? The independence which I mean is not independence of work; I certainly want to earn my living, I find a pleasure in it; but I do not wish to be bound down to any other obligation if I can help it.

I will gladly listen to your proposals, but you must expect my refusal in advance; for they are either charity, or there are conditions attached; and I do not desire either the one or the other. I will never pledge any portion of my freedom, neither for my own support, nor for that of anyone else. I wish to work, but as I please; and even to do nothing when it pleases me, without anyone complaining—except my stomach.

I have nothing more to say about the compensations; while everything else passes away, true friendship remains, and it is then that it possesses delights without bitterness and without end. Make yourself more familiar with my dictionary, my good friend, if you wish that we should understand each other. Believe me, my expressions rarely have the

ordinary meaning; it is always my heart which holds converse with you, and perhaps you will some day learn that it does not speak like another. Good-bye till to-morrow.

Continuation of the Diary

I have seen very little of M. Grimm for some time. He scarcely ever leaves the Baron d'Holbach, who has just married the sister of his first wife, who is said to be a charming woman. It is no use for his friends to talk; a man who is so keenly afflicted by the death of his first wife, as he was, and is yet so readily consoled, cannot be a man of stedfast character.

I have endeavoured to persuade Rousseau that his principles, which would be very commendable if he were free, would be very reprehensible in his position, since he could not allow himself to expose two women who had sacrificed all for him to the risk of poverty and wretchedness. "This consideration," I said to him, "ought to make you less hard to please, and to persuade you not to reject the assistance which friendship offers, and it even deserves to change your dislike into a consent, honourable alike in your own eyes and in the eyes of those who may hear of it"; but I produced little effect upon his mind. "So then, I am a slave," he answered, "and I shall be obliged to submit my lot to the will of another; no, no, that does not suit me. I ask no one to remain with me; I want no one; Madame and Mademoiselle le

Vasseur are free, and I claim to be the same; I have told them so twenty times; I neither ask them to remain nor to follow me."

This sophistical reasoning did not satisfy me; I told him so; he made no answer; but, to judge from the manner in which he listened to me, I suspect that he is not fond of certain truths. "I am astonished," I said to him, "that, in spite of your intellect, experience, and philosophy, you attach such importance to a number of trifles which frequently are not worth the trouble of mentioning, or even worthy of notice." "What the deuce!" he answered, "you call the injustice, the daily ingratitude, the bitterness of my so-called friends, trifles!" "Come now," I said to him, "I can only reply to that by the saying, 'One laughs with you, and you get angry!' But you cannot believe for a moment that anyone intends to wound your feelings purposely." "Purposely or not, what does it matter to me? But do not think, Madame, that it is on my account alone that I am disgusted; the way in which I have often seen you treated by your best friends ——" "Do as I do, my friend; if they are false, spiteful, and unfair, I leave them alone, I pity them, and I wrap myself up in my cloak; can I offer you half of it?"

He laughed and said: "I do not yet know what I shall make up my mind to do; but if I accept your offer to live at the Hermitage, I am more than ever determined to refuse the money which you want to lend me. There I shall want for nothing

in the way of eatables; a cow, a pig, and a kitchen-garden will amply provide for our support."

I did not wish to provoke him any further, and we parted, feeling half cheerful and half uncomfortable. M. d'Épinay agreed to allow me to get the Hermitage ready: as it will cost him nothing, and he nevertheless intends to boast of his consent, it was easy to obtain. I set the men to work. The house is all ready, and as soon as I know Rousseau's decision I will get it furnished. I have had the fireplaces altered. I have had that in the large hall placed in such a manner that, with the aid of plates and stove-pipes, it warms three rooms at once.

I am really sorry for poor Desmahis. M. Grimm told me yesterday evening the story of one of his follies; and, although he is the principal actor in the adventure, he only knew it the day before. It is so curious that I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of transcribing it.

Nearly a month ago Desmahis visited me several times, and it so happened that he nearly always called when M. Grimm was present. Either my expression must have let him see that he might be in the way or he imagined it, for he sometimes allowed himself to utter certain pleasantries at the Baron Holbach's in regard to the annoyance which he imagined we felt at the arrival of a third party. The Baron, who has a very cordial and sincere affection for M. Grimm, thought that he was playing the part of a coxcomb at my house. Being by no means favourably disposed towards

me — probably owing to the hints of the unworthy Duclos, who, from what I learned on this occasion, never spares me in society — he thought it his duty to reprimand his friend seriously. He at first answered with a jest; but when his remonstrances became too strong, he thanked the Baron for the motive which caused him to speak, but, at the same time, so earnestly begged, even ordered, him to be silent, once for all, that neither he nor the others have since attempted to return to the subject.

After this M. Grimm thought no more about the matter. As for Desmahis, either because he had heard it said that M. Grimm did not approve of his pleasantries, although he had given him no proof of this, or because, naturally distrustful, he thought that he was angry with him and was trying to show it to him—in any case, when dining at the Baron's one day, he took as meant for himself a general remark made by Grimm, in which he had so little intention of referring to him, that he did not even remember it. Desmahis, considering himself insulted, endeavoured, by innuendoes, to make Grimm sensible of it, but without success. Desmahis looked at him carefully, and never left him. When Grimm went out, he followed him, having no doubt that he would speak more plainly to him in the street. He was greatly surprised to find that Grimm spoke more quietly, and took leave of him at the first turning. Desmahis felt it his duty to tell him where he would walk on that day and the next. M. Grimm,

who did not exactly understand the reason of this confidence, wished him a pleasant walk; and it was only a few days ago that he heard from M. de Margency, one of their mutual friends, all that had been in Desmahis' mind. He assured M. de Margency that he had never had any grievance, and that, consequently, he felt no resentment against him; that he did not believe that Desmahis was capable of using language by which I might possibly feel insulted, because I did not deserve it; that M. Desmahis was received by me in too friendly a manner for him to allow himself to use such language; and that, as for a joke, I know how to appreciate one, and to laugh at it when it was good, and to forget it promptly when it was bad, since what I feared most was weariness. Apparently, Desmahis considered his own jokes poor, since I have not seen him since; I am sorry for it; his conversation and society are agreeable, and he is a loss to our circle.

Yesterday, I received a visit from a man who has just spent a week with M. de Francueil. To judge from the account he gave us of the gay and dissipated life he is leading, he is anything but unhappy. This discovery has made me feel easy; I see that the cause of his annoyance was vanity rather than real feeling.

M. d'Épinay continues to commit various extravagances. He has just established a theatrical school in the house of the Rose girls; he thinks he is performing an act worthy of a citizen in ruining his children, in order to train candidates

for the stage at his expense. Each day is distinguished by some fresh folly from which he sincerely believes that he derives great credit.

From Rousseau *to* Madame d'Épinay.

At last, Madame, I have made up my mind, and you can guess that you have gained the day. I shall therefore spend Easter at the Hermitage, and I will remain there as long as I am comfortable, and you permit me to do so; my plans do not go further than that. I will call upon you to-morrow, and we will talk the matter over; but be secret, I beg of you. The trouble of moving makes me tremble! Ah, how unfortunate it is to be so rich! I shall be obliged to leave half of myself at Paris, even though you will be no longer there; this half will consist of chairs, tables, cupboards, and everything which it will not be necessary to add to what you may have already put in my château. Adieu till to-morrow.

Continuation of the Diary.

The delight which this letter caused me when I received it was so great, that I could not help allowing it to break out in the presence of M. Grimm, who happened to be with me at the time. I was much astonished to find that he disapproved of the service I was rendering Rousseau, and he showed it in a manner which seemed to me very harsh. I attempted to combat his opinion;

I showed him the letters which had passed between us. "I see nothing in them," he said, "except secret pride on Rousseau's part throughout. You are doing him a very ill service in giving him the Hermitage to live in, but you are doing yourself far more harm than that. Solitude will completely blacken his imagination; he will look upon all friends as unjust and ungrateful, and you before all the rest, if you once refuse to obey his orders; he will accuse you of having begged him to live near you, and of having prevented him from acceding to the wishes of his country. I can already see the germ of his accusations from the style of the letters which you have shown me. These accusations will not be true, but they will not be absolutely devoid of untruth, and that will be sufficient to bring blame upon you, and to give you the appearance of having committed a wrong, of which you will be as innocent as of those which you have hitherto been credited with committing."

"Ah, my friend," I cried, "do not tell me that twice, for I have always experienced such unfortunate results from doing good that I might perhaps feel inclined to do evil, to see whether the result would be more satisfactory!" "No," replied Grimm, "you will never feel inclined to do that; but, while continuing to do for you and yours the best you can, give up interfering in the affairs of others; the public is too unjust towards you. I declare to you that the least annoying thing that can happen to you in all this is, that you will make yourself appear ridiculous; it will

be believed that it is from affectation and a desire of making yourself talked about, that you have provided Rousseau with a home."

"Ah!" I replied, "if you can guarantee that nothing more disastrous than this erroneous interpretation will be the result, it will not take me long to make up my mind." "Nor me either," replied Grimm; "but if this interpretation succeeded a rupture with Rousseau, it would have more serious consequences than you imagine." "That will never happen," I said; "my friendship requires no gratitude." He endeavoured to prove to me that the man would be unhappy wherever he was, in consequence of his being used to be spoiled. "In my house he will meet with nothing but indulgence; we shall all consider it a duty and a pleasure to make his life happy." "Exactly so," said M. Grimm again, "but one always regrets giving way to unreasonableness; this man is full of it; the more it is tolerated, the more it increases. However, the mischief is done; you cannot draw back now; all you can do is to act prudently. But, how is he to live, and what are you doing for him?"

"That is a secret, my friend," I answered; "he will cost me little; he will be comfortable, and he will not know what I intend to do; he will not even suspect it."

I have written to Rousseau that I will take him on Sunday to the Hermitage.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Here is some more music that I have found. However, do not trouble yourself to attempt to get rid of all that for me. Let me know how you are after your fatigues of yesterday. I know that friendship made them pleasant to you; but I am afraid that the body may have to pay for the pleasures of the heart, and that the one may sometimes make the other suffer. As for me, I am already in imagination settled in my château, never to leave it except when you inhabit your own. Good-bye! my kind friend. Do not believe, however, that I mean this phrase to be a mere formality; it must be engraved, not written, and you give it every day some strokes with a graving-tool which will soon render the pen useless, or rather superfluous.

M. Rousseau, who had spent Easter at the Hermitage, was so delighted with it, that his greatest desire was to see himself settled there. Madame d'Épinay made a pleasure of going in person to instal him there, and the day was fixed as soon as everything was ready to receive him. In the morning, she sent a cart to fetch the effects which Rousseau intended to take away with him; one of her people went with it. M. Linant started in the morning on horseback to make all arrangements, and to accompany Madame d'Épinay on her return. At ten o'clock, she went in her carriage to fetch Rousseau and his women-folk. Madame le Vasseur was a woman seventy years

of age, heavy, fat, and utterly feeble. The road, from the entrance to the forest, is impracticable for a berlin; Madame d'Épinay had not foreseen that there would be any trouble in conveying the worthy old woman, and that it would be impossible for her to make the rest of the journey on foot; they were accordingly obliged to nail some stout sticks to an armchair, and to carry Mother le Vasseur as far as the Hermitage. The poor woman shed tears of joy and gratitude; but Rousseau, when the first moment of surprise and emotion was over, walked along in silence, his head bent towards the ground, without appearing to take the least interest in what was going on. We dined with him. Madame d'Épinay was so exhausted that, after dinner, she nearly fainted; she did what she could to hide it from Rousseau, who suspected it, but did not want to appear to notice it.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Although the weather has been troublesome to me since my arrival here, I have just spent the three most peaceful and happiest days of my life; this will be the case even more when the workmen who are engaged by my luxury or your solicitude for me have left. Thus, I shall not be properly in the enjoyment of my solitude for two or three days; in the meantime, I am settling down, not in accordance with the Turkish principle of not making any lasting habitation here below, but in accordance with my own, which inclines me never

to quit that which I occupy. You will find me delightfully quartered, with the exception of the magnificence which you have introduced, and which, every time I enter my room, causes me to look respectfully for the tenant of an abode so well furnished. I do not advise you to expect excessive compliments at our first interview; on the contrary, I am reserving for you serious reproach for having come, ill and suffering as you were, to instal me here without regard either for yourself or for me. Make haste to reassure me as to the consequences of your indiscretion, and remember, once for all, that I shall never forgive you for thus forgetting my interests while thinking of yours.

I have found two mistakes in the account which accompanied the money you have sent me; both are to your disadvantage, and make me suspect that you may very likely have made others of the same kind, a method which you would not long find successful. One is a matter of fourteen livres, since you have paid for seven quires of Dutch paper at the rate of five livres five sous, instead of three livres five sous which it cost me, and which I have noted for you; the other is six livres for a Racine which I have never had, and which you consequently cannot have sold at a profit for me; so that you are my creditor to the amount of twenty livres. Let us say no more about the money, and return to ourselves.

I have thought of nothing but myself these few days. I have been tasting the beauties of my abode and the delights of a perfect freedom; but this morning, while walking in a delightful spot,

I imagined my old friend Diderot by my side, and, while pointing out to him the charms of the walk, I was sensible that they increased for myself. I do not know whether I shall ever be really able to enjoy this increase; if it should ever happen, it will hardly be except by the influence of my old friend Grimm; perhaps he will be able and will be kind enough to procure me a visit from the friend whom I have procured for him, and to share with me the pleasure it will afford me to receive him. It is not yet time to speak of all that; but when shall I see you, in health, and your preserver? He has promised me to come, and no doubt he will do so. As for you, my kind friend, however anxious I am to see you, if you come without him, do not, at any rate, come without his permission. Good-bye! In spite of the hermit's beard and the bear's skin, permit me to embrace you, and lay at the feet of the owner of the hut the homage of his very devoted subject and honorary water-bailiff.[1]

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

I am taking advantage of my gardener's return to thank you, my dear hermit, for letting me hear from you. As for myself, my health is not so bad; I have slept tolerably well the last two nights. Let them speak for me. I assure you that your installation has done me considerable good.

I have already performed part of your commissions. Your friend Diderot, whom, as you

[1] The reservoir of the waters of the park of La Chevrette was at Épinay.

know, I never see, because he is afraid of new acquaintances, intends to go and see you immediately. You know that he is not master of his time; you must therefore set down to his engagements the delay which your friendship might perhaps render unendurable to you. Believe, my friend, that your friends think about you and regret you: think only of the satisfaction you will feel at seeing them again when the weather and their occupations will allow them.

I send Madame and Mademoiselle le Vasseur some little trifles which may be useful to them, until they have got their wardrobe in order. Good-bye, my hermit; I wish you good health, fine weather, and all the contentment you deserve.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

You will be very glad to learn, Madame, that I am more and more delighted with my abode; unless you or I change greatly, I will never leave it. In conjunction with M. d'Épinay, you will enjoy the pleasure of having made a man happy; that is something to prevent you from regretting the exchange of the cloak of which you offer me the half.

I have still a little difficulty to get out of—the removal of the rest of my things. If you will be so kind, Madame, you will have to extricate me from this final embarrassment. For that purpose, I should like—but let us be a little systematic; for I should like so many things, that I need "firstlies" and "secondlies."

1. Pay Madame Sabi 39 livres 16 sous for rent and capitation-tax,[1] according to the note which I have made in the note-book sent herewith.

2. Obtain a receipt for both in the said book.

3. Give notice for the end of the present term.

4. Have the bed and the hangings in the alcove taken down, if it is possible.

5. Pack both on the gardener's cart, together with the mattresses and anything else that can be added in the way of earthenware and small utensils.

6. For that purpose it will be necessary to send some experienced person with the gardener, who will know how to take down and pack everything without injuring it.

7. For another journey there will still be a camp-bed which is in a garret; about forty bottles which are still in the cellar; and the chest of drawers, with the pamphlets which it contains; for the transport of these latter I will send a trunk from here, with a letter to ask M. Deleyre to superintend the removal of these papers.

I must add to this the trifling precaution of beginning by paying Madame Sabi, that she may not be alarmed at seeing my rooms completely stripped without mention being made of the rent that has already begun and is consequently due.

All this assumes that Madame d'Esclavelles' removal is finished, and is suggested in order that the gardener's cart may not return empty while

[1] A tax levied per head in proportion to the rank or fortune of the individual. This tax, established in 1356, was abolished in 1698, revived in 1701, and definitely suppressed at the time of the Revolution.

there are things to be taken back. Besides, my great carefulness, which has made all these arrangements with considerable effort, will nevertheless trust to yours in regard to any alterations which it may be convenient to make in the matter.

Accept Mademoiselle le Vasseur's humble thanks. You had guessed, then, that the ink-bottle had been carefully spilt on the way over all these good people's linen, of which hardly one single piece has escaped without damage? It seems that you, like the gods, exercise a foreseeing and beneficent providence; that was almost what was said to me on the receipt of your present. The weather has not yet begun to mend, and your house is not finished. There is no reason to come so soon. What you have to do, so as to employ this interval profitably, is to continue to strengthen your health so that, when you are at La Chevrette, you may be able to come to the Hermitage frequently to find a friend and solitude. I will show you some delightful walks, which I shall love even still more when once you love them.

Your advice is good, and for the future I will make use of it. I will love my friends without uneasiness, but without coldness; I shall be delighted to see them, but I shall know how to do without them. I feel that they will never cease to be equally dear to me, and I have only lost, in regard to them, that excessive delicacy, which sometimes made me unwell, and always discontented. Besides, I have never doubted Diderot's good resolutions; but it is a long distance from his door to mine, and there are many people to

call upon on the way. I am lost if he arranges to come and see me; he will intend to do so a hundred times, and I shall never see him once. He is a man who must be carried off from his own house, and seized by force in order to make him carry out his intentions.

Good-bye, my kind friend; I will not say Madame, although I have used the word twice by inadvertence at the beginning of this scrawl. But what is the need of this corrective? What matters the difference of words when the heart gives the same meaning to all?

From Rousseau *to* Madame d'Épinay.

I am beginning to feel very uneasy about you, Madame; this is the fourth time in succession that I have written to you without receiving an answer. I have never failed to answer *you* since your return to Paris, and I do not deserve this negligence on your part or the reproach which you have made against me of negligence on mine. Make my mind easy, I beg of you, and at least tell me that you are well, that I may cease to be alarmed, and may content myself with being angry.

I reopen my letter, which was already written and sealed, on the receipt of yours and the mill. You appease me at the expense of my peace of mind. There are many things I should like to say to you, but your messengers oblige me to defer them all to another time. I swear to you that I would willingly get you imprisoned in the Bastille, if I could be sure of being able to spend

six months there alone with you. I am convinced that we should both leave it more virtuous and happier for it.

Do not count upon me for Tuesday's dinner. If Diderot keeps his word to me, I could not keep mine to you. Neither have I made up my mind about the journey to Geneva. If you sleep at La Chevrette, I will most certainly come and see you the next day, if the weather is only tolerable; there we shall be able to talk. If not, I will write to you more fully.

I send you a letter from Tronchin, the beginning of which I do not understand at all, because I am not acquainted with the facts. Read it, and send it on to Deleyre, or a copy of the part relating to his friend. Do not torment your mind with chimeras. Abandon yourself to the honest feelings of your good heart, and, in spite of your systems, you will be happy. Even your ailments will not prevent it. Adieu!

I also send you a letter from Romilly. I do not know M. de Silhouette at all; perhaps, if Grimm were disposed to take an interest in the matter, or tell you what ought to be done, you might be able to serve this honourable man and oblige your friend.

Note from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

I have not been to see you, my dear hermit, I have not written to you, because I have had so many things to think about, domestic annoyances, insupportable worries; but the thing which

worries me most is, that my mother is beginning to spoil my children more than ever, so that I find myself obliged to treat them with greater severity than I could wish. I may be mistaken, but it seems to me that my son has a strong taste for the dissipation and frivolity by which his father is dominated; this instinct is very singular, and alarms me. We will discuss these matters the first time we meet. You positively refuse to tell me how your health is, and whether you felt tired from your efforts the other day. Good-bye, my dear hermit; shall I see you soon?

Rousseau's *reply to* Madame d'Épinay.

I intended to call upon you on Thursday, but the rain spoilt the roads, and they are not yet dry. I intend, however, if it is fine, to attempt the journey to-morrow. Meanwhile, let me hear from you, for I am uneasy about your bodily and mental condition. Good-bye! my Lady and friend, I long for those moments of tranquillity when you will have time to love me a little. I send you back your two books, for which I am much obliged.

Continuation of the Diary.

Two days ago I went to La Chevrette to arrange certain matters before settling there with my children. I had informed Rousseau of my visit beforehand, and he came to see me. I think he needs my presence, and that solitude has

already stirred his bile. He complains of everybody. Diderot is always going to see him, and never does; M, Grimm neglects him; the Baron d'Holbach forgets him; he declares that only myself and Gauffecourt show any regard for him. I attempted to make excuses for them, but without success. I hope that he will be more at La Chevrette than at the Hermitage. I am convinced that the only way of making this man happy is to pretend to take no notice of him and yet to be incessantly thinking about him; that is why I did not press him to stay, when he told me that he wanted to return to the Hermitage, although it was late and the weather was very bad. I asked him how he intended to occupy himself; he told me that he intended to take to music-copying again, which would procure him a livelihood agreeably and amuse him at the same time. "I hope you will give me your custom and get me that of your friends," he added; "but I must not be hurried, for I only intend to copy when I choose to do so, and when I do not feel inclined to do anything else." To begin with, M. d'Épinay and myself asked him for a dozen copies. The following morning I sent someone to enquire after him; my messenger brought back the following letter:

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I got back drenched, at one o'clock in the morning, but otherwise uninjured. I feel grateful for your uneasiness. This morning your gardener

has again carried off some peaches to the market at Montmorenci. Nothing could exaggerate the shameless impudence he displays in his thefts; far from my presence having any restraint upon him, I see very clearly that it serves him as an excuse for taking you less fruit than usual. For a long time there will be nothing to do in your garden; if you dismissed him sooner rather than later, you would save the remains of your fruit, provided that you let me have notice beforehand, and see that the key of the house is given back to you. In regard to the bed and the contents of his room, as I do not know what belongs to you or to him, I will allow nothing to be taken away without instructions from you. It is really useless for anyone to sleep here; but, if you think it necessary, I will get someone in the neighbourhood whom I can trust, and whom I will not allow to have the key; this will give you time to look out for another gardener. The only thing I shall require to make the women-folk easy will be a gun or some pistols for the winter, but I cannot find anyone who is willing to lend them to me, and there would be no sense in buying them. And really, I am sure that we are perfectly safe here, and under the protection of our neighbours. I am obliged to tell you all this in writing, for it is difficult to have a quiet talk during the brief intervals that I am able to spend with you. Good-bye, Madame! I am going to set about your work first, and it shall be done without interruption. My respects to Madame d'Esclavelles, and my kind regards

to the tyrant[1] and your children. My foot is better, although I feel tired.

MADAME D'ÉPINAY'S *reply to the preceding letter.*

Whatever are you talking about, my friend? Guns! pistols! it is really alarming. In inviting you to occupy the Hermitage, it was my intention that you should enjoy all the repose that you need. But as a repose which has to be defended, although preferable to that which has to be paid too dearly for, ceases to be one at all, and as I wish that there should be nothing to disturb yours, I beg you to dismiss the gardener immediately from me. If he carries his insolence so far as to ignore my wishes, let me know.

Good-bye, my dear bear! take care of your health. You know there is no hurry about the music.

It was your own fault that you were "drenched."

CONTINUATION OF THE DIARY.

Yesterday I was telling M. Grimm the plan I intended to pursue in regard to Rousseau, and asked him to assist me in carrying it out. He began to laugh. "How little you know your Rousseau," he said. "If you wish to please him, take everything he says in the opposite sense; take scarcely any notice of him, but pretend to take a great deal; speak of him continually

[1] Grimm.

to others, even in his presence, and do not be deceived by the annoyance he will show." I cannot help being rather indignant at hearing him abandon himself to satire at the expense of his unfortunate friend: this is the first time that I have found him unjust. He added: "I strongly advise you, Madame, to endeavour to prevent him from spending next winter at the Hermitage. I declare to you that he will go mad: but, this consideration apart, although it is certainly a serious one, it would be really barbarous to expose old Madame le Vasseur to remaining six months without assistance in a place that is inaccessible owing to the bad weather, without society, without amusement, without resources—it would be inhuman." "I hope," I answered, "that it will be sufficient to make him think of this, to decide him to spend his winter with human beings."

Note from ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Monday.

There is an expression in your letter which troubles me greatly, and I see clearly that your sorrows are not over. I will come as soon as I can possibly find out what the matter is.

I have preferred to dismiss your gardener rather than to leave you the bother of doing so. However, it does not get you out of the difficulty; he declares that he has another account with you. I am not ignorant of what you are doing for me, without

telling me anything about it, and I let you do it, because I love you and it is in no way painful to me to owe to you what I am unable to procure myself, at least at present. He also declares that all the garden tools, some old props and the seeds are his; I am inclined to believe him, but, as I do not feel certain, I will not let anything go out of the house without your instructions.

I do not know whether Diderot's day has changed; they have not sent me any message, and I am expecting them. Good-bye, my kind friend. Yesterday I received a kind letter from Voltaire.

As I know the gardener to be an insolent fellow, I ought to warn you that if, as far as I am concerned, I have reason to be satisfied with his services, he has equal reason to be satisfied with my recognition of them.

CHAPTER XV (1756–1757).

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

HERE I am, settled at La Chevrette, Monsieur, and quite ready to receive you. If you are a man of your word, I shall expect you next week. You know that a stay in the country always adds to my comfort; I enjoy my friends more, my children, and myself; but there are several reasons which made me desire to come and snatch a few moments of repose there before winter comes on. My mother is getting infirm and can only walk with difficulty; here I can attend to her every moment in the day. It seems to me that I am becoming greedy of her society; I reproach myself for the moments when I am absent from her; and when I see her again, I look at her, oh! how I look at her, I devour her with my eyes, and I am never tired of seeing her. Pauline took it into her head to tell me yesterday that she found her changed. I had observed it, but I was unwilling to confess it to myself; the child's remark struck me as a discovery.

By-the-way, speaking of her, Monsieur, you will see a few ideas which I have set down on paper, to help Mademoiselle Durand in bringing her up. I think that you will approve of them,

because they have been put into my mind by the child's disposition and her governess's ability. If I had to advise Linant, I should be careful not to use such language to him. M. Grimm has promised to help me with my children's education. He studies their character as carefully as myself; we communicate to each other our observations, and, according to our reflections, and, above all, according to his opinion, I decide upon the manner in which it is best for them to be treated. I have no doubt remaining when M. Grimm has spoken. You and I, Monsieur, have agreed more than once that no one possessed a fairer mind or more delicate tact. Amongst all the obligations which I owe to both of you, I highly value that of having learnt from you to dispense with others, to busy myself with domestic details, and to control my own affairs. It is certain that one cannot live long in M. Grimm's society without being conscious of an increased love of virtue.

I thought that I was alone in contributing to Rousseau's comfort, but I have heard from Mademoiselle le Vasseur that M. Grimm and M. Diderot have made up an income of 400 livres for her and her mother. Can you imagine such honourable behaviour on the part of two men who have hardly enough for themselves? M. Grimm had told me nothing about it; every day I discover fresh reasons for esteeming him.

While we were walking yesterday, there arose a discussion between him and Rousseau, which was in reality merely a joke. Rousseau seemed to

submit to it with a good grace; but, unless I am greatly mistaken, he was inwardly annoyed by it. He had brought back to M. d'Épinay the copies which he had made for him; and my husband asked him if he would be able to deliver him the same amount in a fortnight. He answered: "Perhaps yes, perhaps no; it depends upon disposition, temper, and health." "In this case," said M. d'Épinay, "I will only give you six to do, because I want to be certain of having them." "Well!" replied Rousseau, "you will have the satisfaction of having six which will spoil the six others; for I defy you to get any done which will approach mine in correctness and perfection." "Do you see," rejoined M. Grimm laughing, "how the copyist's pride has already got hold of him? If you were to say that there is not a comma missing in your writings, everybody would agree, but I wager that there are some notes transposed in your copies." Laughing and accepting the wager, Rousseau blushed, and blushed still more violently when it was found, on examination, that M. Grimm was right. He continued sad and thoughtful for the rest of the evening, and he returned this morning to the Hermitage without saying a word.

Continuation of the Diary.

As I had not heard anything of Rousseau for two days, I sent to enquire after him; he contented himself with informing me that he had a

task on hand, which prevented him from answering me. Not a word about his health; I accordingly concluded that he was quite well. While I was sending to the Hermitage, Mademoiselle le Vasseur came to bring me three copies; she declares that Rousseau is sick at heart and that his health is affected by it; she seems to me to dread the stay at the Hermitage during the winter as much for her mother as for Rousseau. She declares that no one will ever persuade him to return to Paris, but that he would rather consent to spend the severest months at La Chevrette. "At least," she said, "we should all be within nearer reach of assistance, and we should be less exposed to the severity of the weather."

M. Grimm, Gauffecourt, and myself have agreed to do all we possibly can to persuade Rousseau to leave the Hermitage this winter.

Evening.

Is it imprudence, folly, or thoughtlessness which has induced M. d'Épinay to confide to us Rousseau's impertinent remark to himself and his mistresses? "This is unheard of. I went for a walk to the Hermitage," he said to us: "nothing can be compared to the folly of your hermit; it amounts to positive impertinence. I brought two ladies to see him, for whom I had got him some work to do; they were curious to see this singular man. He was in front of his door; he first saw me; he came towards me cap in hand; he saw these ladies;

he saluted us, put on his cap again, turned his back upon us, went away, and began to run again. Can anything be madder?" "Why so?" answered De Jully. "There are so many people who are afraid of roses![1] He is, perhaps, one of the number." "Ah! I understand," I said, "that, if he is mad, his madness is that of an honourable man."

I kept the promise I had made to Madame d'Épinay that I would go and spend some time at La Chevrette. While I was there, M. Diderot wrote to M. Grimm to ask him if he could not take a journey to Paris, in order to look over a work which he had just finished, and which he did not want to send to the printer's without hearing his opinion and Rousseau's. M. Grimm, who had hoped to enjoy the remainder of the autumn quietly, proposed to Diderot, with Madame d'Épinay's kind permission, to come and spend the week he asked him to give him at La Chevrette; Rousseau was to be there. The work would have been cheerfully looked over, and Madame d'Épinay would have made the acquaintance of a man whom she regarded as the profoundest genius of the century. M. Diderot declined this offer, I might almost say with affright. M. Grimm was annoyed and grieved at it, because he felt that the impressions which Duclos had given him were by no means effaced. He even suspected Rousseau of keeping them up, and spoke to me about it;

[1] Alluding to the name of M. d'Épinay's mistresses.

but at that time I was so far from believing the latter capable of falsehood, that I did my utmost to destroy this suspicion in M. Grimm's mind. I succeeded the more easily as he is not mistrustful, and I have never known a man who was rendered more unhappy at the wrongs of others. He concealed from Madame d'Epinay the reasons of Diderot's refusal, and it was agreed that these gentlemen should dine at Rousseau's, and that the work should be brought there; that M. Grimm should take it away to La Chevrette, and read it at leisure; and that there should be a second dinner at the Hermitage, to sum up opinions. Diderot asked that M. Desmahis should be admitted to these conferences; and he consequently came to spend a few days at La Chevrette.

Madame d'Épinay's Diary.

September.

What has just happened to me is so singular and so completely ridiculous, that I would much rather forget it than perpetuate the recollection of it; at any rate, I am going to sacrifice my vanity to your amusement. M. Desmahis was at La Chevrette when you left it, as you know, and was revising M. Diderot's work together with M. Grimm. They were not always of the same opinion; but, as their discussions often took place in my presence, I can answer for the gentleness and courtesy with which M. Grimm defended his opinion, without, however, abandoning it.

suspicion in M. Grimm's mind. I

from Madame d'Épinay the reasons of Diderot's refusal, and it was agreed that these gentlemen should dine at Hermitage, and that the work should be brought there that M. Grimm should take it away to La Chevrette, and read it at leisure; and that there should be a second dinner at the Hermitage, to sum up opinions.

Monsieur Grimm's Tête-a-tête with Madame d'Épinay

Madame d'Épinay's Diary.

September.

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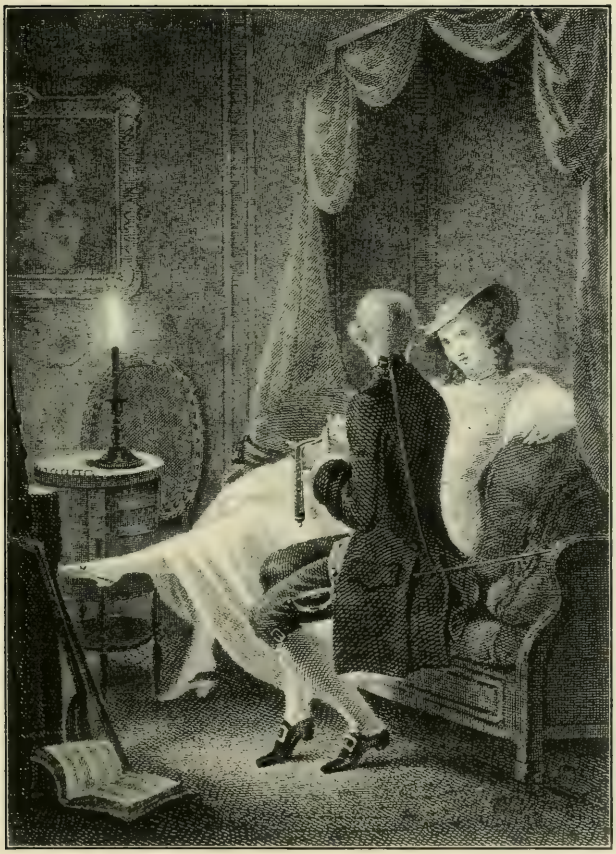

There is no doubt that nearly all Desmahis' objections were trifling and puerile. Four days ago, as we were walking alone, he asked me whether I knew what grievance M. Grimm had against him. I told him that I had not noticed that he had any grievance against him or anyone else, and I told the truth. He assured me that he had for some time past regarded him with disfavour; that, from time to time, he let fall remarks that were in truth indiscreet but very severe, and that, if he continued, he would demand an explanation from him. He added that he would bring them to my notice before speaking to him about them. I thought that their differences of opinion in regard to the work with which they were now occupied was perhaps the cause of this slight bitterness which had escaped my notice. Now, as this revision was finished, as M. Grimm had gone to take back the manuscript, and I knew that he had a friendship for Desmahis, I thought that the matter was at an end, and troubled myself little about the consequences. However, I consoled him to the best of my ability, and thought no more about it.

M. Grimm returned very late in the evening; he was tired. Owing to the bad weather, he had felt cold on the road, which made him little disposed to talk. As he wished to talk to me, whom he had not seen for two days, he persuaded me to retire early, so that we could spend a few moments in my room before he went to his own.

This appeared to me as natural as it really was; but Desmahis attributed Grimm's silence, his discomfort, and even, I believe, the cold which he had felt on the road, to himself. On the next day, that is, yesterday, he did not come to breakfast at all, and sent a message that he was unwell. We went to see him; he complained of having had no sleep, adding that it had affected his nerves, and that he had not felt well enough to put in an appearance so early. M. Grimm was very gay; he rallied him upon his melancholy, which was our usual style, when we saw him unwell, and M. Grimm's gaiety did him a little good.

We went out while he dressed, after he had promised to rejoin us in the drawing-room at the usual hour. In fact, at noon, he came down. M. Grimm was playing chess with Gauffecourt; I was working by their side. Desmahis, at the end of half-an-hour, proposed to me that we also should have a game. I consented, and he placed the table at the other end of the drawing-room. When I had taken my seat there, he said to me: "Did you hear how M. Grimm treats me?" "I heard nothing at all," I answered. "Ah!" said he, "that was because you did not pay any attention. M. Gauffecourt even noticed it, for he looked at me and blushed for me. Listen. Stay, do you see how slyly he is looking at me?" "But," I replied, a little disturbed, however, by the testimony of Gauffecourt which he quoted, "he is short-sighted, and that gives him the

appearance of meaning something of which he certainly has not the least idea."

At this moment, M. Grimm said to us: "You have put yourselves a long way off; I suppose you do not wish us to judge of your attacks?" "It is out of modesty," I replied, laughing. "Yes, yes, that is all very well," he said, "but people who hide themselves are afraid——" "In that case," cried Desmahis, "we will show ourselves——" "Gentlemen, gentlemen," added M. Grimm, "look out for mate!" This remark was very natural, the point of the joke being that what Desmahis fears most is checkmate. The game was a long one, and consequently the nonsense continued all the longer, because Desmahis, who attributed it to himself, did not fail to take notice of it. I admit that several of M. Grimm's remarks seemed to be addressed to him, either from the interpretation which Desmahis put upon them, or because they were really ambiguous; and they alarmed me the more, as I saw that the latter was determined to ask for an explanation of them. Dinner interrupted the games; I tried to find the opportunity of speaking privately to M. Grimm for a moment, but it was impossible. Desmahis was placed next to him, and it so happened that, while they were settling themselves in their places, M. Grimm dug him with his elbow. Desmahis thought that this was a signal, and the apology which he demanded did not undeceive him. However, I did not lose sight of any of their movements, and I was in a

state of most violent agitation during the meal. Desmahis was to leave in the evening; M. Grimm asked him at what time. "Not until after the walk," he answered. "The reason I ask," replied Grimm, "is that I should like to accompany you half-way." "I shall be very pleased," said Desmahis; "I am even looking forward to it."

After he had made this answer, he looked at me. I confess that, at that moment, I felt dizzy with anxiety; I could not think seriously that M. Grimm wanted to fight about nothing; but Desmahis' evident desire to do so might force him to it, if he really had the least prejudice against him; besides, he might take offence at the demand for an explanation which Desmahis intended to make. When we left the table, I took him aside, in spite of all that Desmahis did to prevent me, and I asked him what was the meaning of all these demonstrations against his friend. The serious and frightened tone in which I put this question astounded him; he swore to me that he did not know what I meant; that he was on the same terms as usual with Desmahis. "Well then," I said to him, "if you are not deceiving me, go and assure him of it, for he is himself resolved to fight a duel with you and is quite convinced that such is your intention also." M. Grimm burst into a fit of laughing, and asked me whether we had all gone mad. "What!" said he: "is that the cause of your great trouble during the whole of dinner-time?" He laughed so at my simplicity, and rallied me so sarcasti-

cally upon my readiness to get foolish ideas into my head, that, after having laughed at it myself, I feel truly ashamed of it.

I went to look for Desmahis, but I could not convince him how foolish he was. I took him to M. Grimm, and left them to have an explanation together; they quitted the conference very good friends. Desmahis left apparently somewhat ashamed; and I can understand that he must be, since I also am ashamed of having believed his fancies.

Continuation of the Diary.

November.

During the two days that Rousseau has been here, we have not ceased to dissuade him from passing the winter at the Hermitage. He at first took it as a joke, but afterwards became annoyed. Yesterday, he listened to us in silence, and finished by telling me that he would give us his answer to-day. This morning, he left before anyone was up, and wrote to me after he reached home. He is apparently afraid of our eloquence. We do not intend to consider ourselves beaten, and mean to go and see him and speak to him again.

From Rousseau *to* Madame d'Épinay.

I will begin by telling you that I am resolved and determined, whatever happens, to spend the winter at the Hermitage; that nothing will ever make me alter my resolution, and that you your-

self have not the right to attempt to make me do so, for such was our agreement when I came; therefore, let us say no more about it. I will only tell you, in two words, my reasons.

It is essential that I should have leisure and tranquillity, and all my conveniences for working this winter; this is of the most vital importance for me. I have been working five months to provide for everything, in order that no anxiety may divert me from my purpose. I have provided myself with wood; I have laid in a stock of provisions; I have collected and arranged papers and books so as to be handy for use; I have made ample provision for all my comforts in case of illness. I can only secure leisure by following this plan, and it will be absolutely necessary that I should devote myself to settling the time which I feel it indispensable to devote to my work. A removal, I know from experience, cannot take place, in spite of what you can do, without loss, damage, and expense on my part, which I cannot put up with a second time. If I take away everything, that will create terrible embarrassment; if I leave anything behind, I shall want it, or someone will come here and steal it during the winter; lastly, in my present position, my time and convenience are more valuable to me than my life. But do not imagine that I am running any risk here; I shall find no difficulty in defending myself against the enemy without, it is within that he was dangerous! I promise you never to go any distance without taking precau-

tions. During the winter, I do not even intend to walk at all, except in the garden; you would have to lay siege to attack me here. As an extra precaution, I will get a neighbour always to sleep in the house. Lastly, as soon as you have sent me some weapons, I will never go out without a pistol ready to hand, even round the house. Besides, I intend to get M. Matta to speak to our friend. Therefore, my kind friend, say no more to me about it; you will only make me wretched, and will gain nothing by it, for contradiction is fatal to me, and I am right in my obstinacy.

I see from your note that you dismiss our friend on Monday, not on Sunday; I notice this, because it is a matter of some importance that I should be informed of the exact day. Do not forget to give him a list of what you agree to his removing from the room; otherwise, as I do not know what belongs to him, I shall let nothing go out. I feel touched by your anxiety and the uneasiness which I cause you; but, as they are unreasonable, I beg you to calm them. Love me always, and all will be well. Good-bye!

If it is fine to-morrow (Saturday), I will try to come and see you.

Madame d'Épinay's Diary.

I have been unable to prevail upon Rousseau to leave the Hermitage this winter. Madame and Mademoiselle le Vasseur do not venture to tell him their fears, because he has given them to

understand that, if he should be further annoyed, he will go away without saying a word, and will leave them to do as they please. M. Grimm and Gauffecourt have, like myself, exhausted their eloquence in vain. There is no doubt that his ill-humour gains fresh hold upon him daily, and I dread the effect this profound solitude for six months may have upon him. In the bottom of his heart, he has not pardoned M. Grimm for having discovered some mistakes in his copying. He does not venture to tell me; but he has told the Comtesse d'Houdetot that he did not know what he had done to Grimm, but that he saw plainly that he was trying to injure him in our estimation. He also complains that the Baron d'Holbach has not been to see him once since he has been at the Hermitage. Perhaps he will also complain of me directly.

The Comtesse d'Houdetot left us a week ago, in order to receive her husband's sister, who, since last year, has been expected to come to Paris for the sake of her son's education; she has arrived. She is a little woman, stout, proud, foolish, very polite to her sister-in-law, and exacting towards others; her name is Madame de Blainville. I love the Comtesse with all my heart; but when she is surrounded by her dogs and her Madame de Blainville, I prefer any other woman.

I am returning to Paris immediately, where I hope to lead a happy life this winter, and, above all, a more peaceful one than I have led during the summer.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

December 13th.

My dear friend, I feel that I shall be suffocated, unless I pour out my sorrows into the bosom of friendship. Diderot has written me a letter which cuts me to the heart. He gives me to understand that it is only as a favour that he does not look upon me as a villain, and that 'there is a great deal to be said on that point'; these are his words; and do you know the reason? Because Madame le Vasseur is with me. Good heavens! what more could he say if she were not? I picked her and her husband up in the street, when they were too old to earn their living. She has never given me more than three months' attendance. For the last ten years I have taken the bread out of my own mouth for her; I have taken her into a healthy climate, where she wants for nothing; for her sake I have given up the idea of staying in my native place; she is absolutely her own mistress; she comes and goes as she pleases. I look after her as if she were my own mother; all this counts for nothing, and I am only a villain because I do not further sacrifice my life and happiness for her, and go to Paris and die of despair for her amusement. Alas! the poor woman does not wish it at all; she makes no complaint; she is perfectly content. But I see what it is; M. Grimm will never be satisfied with himself until he has deprived me of all the friends whom I have given to him.

Oh, city philosophers! if such are your virtues, you console me for being only a villain! I was happy in my retirement; solitude is no burden to me; I have little fear of poverty; the forgetfulness of the world is indifferent to me; I bear my ills with patience; but—to love, and to find only ungrateful hearts, ah! that is the only thing I cannot endure! Pardon me, my dear friend; my heart is overburdened with weariness, and my eyes are swollen with tears which will not flow. If I could see you for a moment and weep, what a comfort it would be to me! But I will never in my life set foot in Paris again; this time I have sworn it.

I forgot to tell you that there is even some humour in the philosopher's letter: he is rapidly becoming barbarous; it is easy to see that he is getting civilised.

Madame d'Épinay's *reply to* Rousseau.

My friend, if your complaints against M. Diderot have no more foundation than your suspicions of M. Grimm, I pity you, for you will have much reason to reproach yourself. Either be more just towards the latter or cease to expect me to listen to complaints which are grossly insulting to a man who far more deserves your esteem and possesses mine completely.

If I were not kept here by severe rheumatism, I would come and see you at once, and offer you all the consolation that you have reason to expect from my friendship. I cannot believe that M.

Diderot has told you point blank that he believes you a villain: there must certainly be some misunderstanding about that. My friend, be on your guard against the excitement which is often caused by an irritating word heard in solitude and taken in bad part; take my advice, be afraid of being unjust; what is often the result of the expression, when the reason is dear to our heart? Can a friend ever offend us? Is it not always our interest, our happiness, our reputation that he has in view? Perhaps you may have occasioned by some outburst a remark which only bears the meaning you imagine because it is separated from that to which it is the answer. How do I know? As I have not seen your letters or Monsieur Diderot's, I cannot decide or reason consistently. All that I know is that M. Diderot entertains the most sincere friendship for you; you have told me so yourself a hundred times. I am so grieved that I cannot come and see you. I should affect you even less by my presence than by the necessity and comfort of confiding your troubles to someone who feels them as keenly as you do yourself. If my letter could set your tears flowing and procure you a little quietness, I am persuaded that you would look upon things in a different light. Goodbye! Send me your letters, and remember always to see at the top of Diderot's this important heading: "In friendship." That is the real secret of appreciating his fancied insults at their proper value.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Madame, I send you Diderot's letters and my last reply; read and judge us yourself. I am too embittered, too violently indignant, to be able to reason.

I have just told Madame le Vasseur that, however agreeable it might be for both of us to live together, my friends thought that, for a woman of her age, she was not sufficiently comfortable here; that she must go to Paris and live with her children; and that I will give her and her daughter all that I have in the world. Thereupon the daughter began to cry, and, in spite of her grief at the idea of separating from her mother, she protested that she would never leave me, and, in truth, the philosophers will find it no use to talk, I will not force her to do so. I must, therefore, keep something for her support as well as my own. I have told Madame le Vasseur that I will make her an allowance, which will be paid her as long as I live, and my promise shall be carried out. I also told her that I would ask you to settle the amount, and I beg you will do so. Do not be afraid of making it too much; I shall still be a great gainer, if only by my personal freedom.

The most frightful thing for me is, that the good woman has got into her head that it is all a planned thing between Diderot, myself, and her daughter, and that I have thought of it as a means of getting rid of her. In regard to this

she has very justly pointed out to me that, having spent part of the winter here, it is very hard on her to have to leave it when spring is so near. I told her that she was right, but that, if the least harm were to happen to her during the summer, I should not fail to be held responsible for it. "It is not the public," I added, "that will say that, but my friends, and I have not the courage to expose myself to the risk of being considered a murderer by them."

A fortnight ago we were living peacefully here, and in perfect harmony. Now, we are all alarmed, agitated, in tears, obliged to separate. I assure you that this will be a lesson to me never to interfere, except with full knowledge of the facts and the greatest caution, in the domestic affairs of my friends; and I do not even feel at all sure whether I ought to write to M. d'Épinay in favour of poor Cahouet.

As Diderot informs me that he is coming on Saturday, it is important to send him his letter immediately. If he comes, he will be received with politeness, but my heart will be shut against him, and I feel that we shall never see each other again. It matters little to him; it will only be one friend the less. But I shall lose everything; I shall be in torments for the rest of my life. Another warning has shown me that I have not a heart which can forget what was once dear to it. Let us avoid, if possible, an irreconcileable rupture. I am so cruelly worried, that I have thought it right to send you this letter by a special mes-

senger, that I may have an answer in the nick of time. Make use of him to take the letter to Diderot, and let me have an answer immediately, if you have any pity for me.

P.S.—I must add that Madame le Vasseur is at present overwhelming me with violent reproaches; she utters them in a harsh and haughty tone, like a person who feels strongly backed up. I make no answer, neither does her daughter; we are content to lament in silence. I see that old people are hard, pitiless, without compassion, and cease to have affection for anything except themselves. You see that I can no longer avoid being a monster. I am one in Monsieur Diderot's eyes, if Madame le Vasseur remains here; I am one in her eyes, if she does not remain here. Whatever I decide to do, I am a villain in spite of myself.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

I received your letter, my kind friend, an hour after I had sent a messenger to you with those which you ask me for. I am not a man to take precautions, especially in dealing with my friends, and I have not kept a copy of any of my letters. You rightly guessed that yours would affect me. I swear to you, my good friend, that your friendship is dearer to me than life, and that it consoles me for everything.

I have nothing to reply to your observations about Diderot's good intentions, except one thing, but this I will ask you to consider well. He knows

my passionate character, and the sensitiveness of my heart. Let us assume that I was wrong; certainly he was the aggressor; it was therefore his part to bring me back by the means which he knew were calculated to have that effect; one word, one single word of kindness would have made the pen fall from my hands and tears from my eyes, and I should have been at the feet of my friend. Instead of that, look at the tone of his second letter, see how he repairs the harshness of the first; if he had designed to break with me, how could he have set about it differently? Believe me, my good friend, Diderot is now a man of the world. There was a time when we were both poor and unknown, and we were friends. I can say the same of Grimm; but they have both become important personages. I have continued the same as I was, and we no longer suit each other.

For the rest, I am inclined to think that I have done injustice to the latter, and even not for the first time; but if you wish to know what have always been my feelings in regard to him, I refer you to an expression in the note which you should have received to-day, and which will not have escaped your notice. But all these people are so proud, so affected, so cold; how can one dare to love them still? No, my good friend, my day is over. Alas! I am reduced to wishing for them that we may never become friends again. There now only remains adversity which can restore to them the affection which they have felt for me. You may judge whether your friendship is dear to

me—you who have not had need of this cruel way of recognising the value of it.

Above all, I hope Diderot will not come. But I ought to feel easy about that; he has promised to do so.

Continuation of the Diary.

The letter which Rousseau wrote to M. Diderot is full of invectives and spiteful cavilling, while he would have had a good game to play if he had shown moderation; for, in truth, those written to him are a trifle harsh. However, it must be admitted that, with good faith, there would never have been a moment's bickering in the matter. Diderot, in order to touch his friend's feelings in regard to the old woman's position, no doubt intended to put before him the reproaches he would have to utter against himself if the least harm should happen to her; reproaches so much the more severe, as poor Madame le Vasseur had a presentiment of it, and a presentiment has great weight with the old and people of her class. Diderot's imagination caused him to see the worthy Le Vasseur lying ill on her death-bed, addressing him in a most pathetic speech; against this tragic picture he can only bring weak and childish arguments, when brought into comparison with this situation on which Rousseau has hitherto supported his refusal to leave the Hermitage. From that time he sees in him nothing but an ingrate, a murderer, he is no longer worthy of his esteem; and he tells him without ceremony that he is a barbarian (these two letters

of Diderot are a very fine piece of poetry); but, with this exception, it is really too bad of Rousseau to leave in a state of uneasiness a woman seventy-five years of age, to whom he owes a great deal, whatever he may say; it is only poetical exaggeration. I have, therefore, just told Rousseau that I advise him not to send his letter, unless he wishes to put himself really in the wrong; but, on the contrary, to send Diderot a sincere invitation to come and see him at his house, where they will be able to enter into a frank explanation with all the friendliness which really, in the bottom of their hearts, they feel for each other. I have even added that, if he is unable to go to the Hermitage, Rousseau must visit him in Paris. I have urged him to do so, since I feel sure of bringing him to an understanding with Diderot, who complains with even greater reason than he does of the first answer. My mother has been ill for two days, otherwise I should have gone to see him. That is pretty nearly the abstract of a very long letter which I have just written to him.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Madame le Vasseur is to write to you, my kind friend; I have asked her to tell you frankly what she thinks. To put her quite at her ease, I have declared to her that I did not want to see her letter, and I beg you will tell me nothing about its contents.

I will not send mine to Diderot, since you are opposed to my doing so. But, as I feel grievously offended, there would be a meanness and falsehood, which I cannot permit myself, in admitting a wrong which I have not committed, and which you yourself would blame, in view of what is going on in my inmost heart. It is certainly true that the Gospel orders him who receives a blow on one cheek to offer the other, but not to ask for pardon. You remember the man in the comedy who cries "Murder" while beating another; such is the part played by the philosopher.

Do not expect to prevent him from coming during the present weather; he would be very sorry if it were finer. Anger will give him the leisure and the strength which friendship refuses to him; he will wear himself out to come on foot to repeat to me the insults which he has heaped upon me in his letters. I shall endure them anything but patiently. He will return to Paris to be ill, and I shall appear, in the sight of all the world, a most odious man. Patience! one must suffer. Do you not admire the cleverness of this man who wanted to fetch me in a cab to dine at Saint-Denis, and to bring me back in a cab, and whose means, a week later, do not permit him to visit the Hermitage except on foot? To use his own language, it is not absolutely impossible that that may have the ring of sincerity; but in this case a week must have wrought a strange revolution in the state of his finances. Oh, philosophy!

I share the grief you feel at the illness of your

mother; but, believe me, your sorrow cannot approach mine: we suffer less at seeing those, whom we love, ill, than at finding them unjust and cruel.

Adieu! my good friend. This is the last time I shall mention this unhappy affair to you.

You speak to me of going to Paris with a coolness which at any other time would delight me. I take for granted all the nice things that might be said on that point; but, notwithstanding, I will never in my life go to Paris, and I bless heaven for having made me a bear, a hermit, and obstinate—rather than a philosopher.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

And you pretend that my letter has done you good? The letter which you have just written to me is more unfair and more filled with animosity than your earlier ones. My friend, you are not capable of judging of yourself; your head is in a fever; solitude is killing you; and I begin to repent of having afforded you the facility of shutting yourself up in it. You think you have cause to complain of M. Diderot, who, however, is guilty of no other offence than that of having exaggerated the expressions of the warmth which he displays in everything, the only object of which is to restore you to the midst of your friends. He has exhausted to no purpose all the arguments relative to your health, safety and comfort; he has struck a note which at any other time would have been

certain to affect you—the repose of a woman seventy-five years of age, who has been obliging enough to isolate herself, at her time of life, in order to follow you ; he perhaps imagined that she was secretly lamenting at the thought of spending the winter beyond the reach of assistance. That was only natural, and you make it a crime against him! My friend, you grieve me—your condition fills me with sorrow ; for if you had coolly told me all that is to be read in your three letters—— No; you are ill—certainly, you are ill! Who will guarantee that the same thing will not very soon happen to me ? It is our duty to tell our friends the truth in all cases; woe betide those who have not the courage to listen to it! You are not made to misunderstand his language, and you do not deserve friends capable of wounding you when you are in your natural state. Be yourself again, then, at once; prepare to open your arms to your friend, who will not be long in flinging himself into them, according to what I have heard.

Meanwhile, M. Grimm has commissioned me to send on to you this parcel from the philosopher. Good-night, my poor bear!

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Diderot has written me a third letter, when sending back my papers. Although you informed me in yours that you were sending me the parcel, it reached me later by another route, so that when

I received it I had already finished my answer to Diderot. You must be as tired of this long bickering as I am worn out by it. Therefore, let us say no more about it, I beg you.

But where have you got the idea that I shall complain of you also? If I had anything to complain of, it would be that you show too much consideration for me, and treat me too kindly. I frequently need to be scolded more than that. I like a tone of rebuke when I deserve it. I believe that I should be the kind of man to regard it sometimes as a kind of friendly cajolery. But it is possible to quarrel with a friend without treating him with contempt; one can very well call him a beast, but one will never call him a rascal. You will never let me hear you say "that you think you are doing me a favour in thinking well of me." You will never insinuate to me that, "upon looking closely, there would be much esteem to abate." You will not tell me "could there be any further good in saying anything about that?" This would not only be insulting me, but also insulting yourself; for it does not become honourable people to have friends of whom they think ill; if it had happened to me, in regard to this point, to wrongly interpret anything said by you, you would certainly hasten to explain your idea to me, and you would be careful not to keep up the same observations, coldly and harshly, in the wrong sense which I might have attributed to them. What, Madame, do you call that? a form, an exterior?

Since we are discussing this subject, I should like to make a declaration to you as to what I require from friendship, and as to what I desire to exhibit in it in my turn.

Blame freely what you find blamable in my rules, but do not expect to find me easily departing from them; for they are drawn from my disposition, which I cannot alter.

In the first place, I wish my friends to be my friends, and not my masters; to advise me without claiming to control me; to enjoy all kinds of rights over my heart, none over my freedom. I consider those persons very singular who, under the name of friends, always claim to interfere in my affairs without telling me anything about theirs. Let them always speak to me freely and frankly; they can say anything to me; contempt excepted, I allow them everything. The contempt of a person who is indifferent to me is a matter of indifference; but, if I were to endure it from a friend, I should deserve it. If he has the misfortune to despise me, let him avoid telling me, let him leave me; that is what he owes to himself. With that exception, when he remonstrates with me, whatever tone he adopts, he is within his rights; when, after having listened to him, I follow my own inclination, I am within mine; and I greatly dislike anyone to keep eternally chattering to me about what is over and done with.

Their great anxiety to do me a number of services which I do not care about is wearisome

to me; it seems to imply a certain air of superiority which is displeasing to me; besides, everyone can do as much. I prefer them to love me and let themselves be loved; that is what friends alone can do. Above all, I am indignant when the first new-comer is able to compensate them for my loss, while I cannot endure anyone's society but theirs in the world. Nothing but their affection can make me endure their kindnesses, but when I once consent to receive them from them, I wish them to consult my taste and not their own; for we think so differently upon so many things, that often what they consider good appears to me bad.

If a quarrel occurs, I should certainly say that he who is in the wrong ought to apologise first; but that means nothing, for everyone always thinks that he is in the right; right or wrong, it is for him who has begun the quarrel to put an end to it. If I take his censure ill, if I am annoyed without reason, if I put myself in a passion at the wrong moment, he ought not to follow my example; if he does, he certainly does not love me. On the contrary, I would have him treat him with affection; do you understand, Madame? In a word, let him begin by soothing me, which will certainly not take long, for there has never been a fire at the bottom of my heart which a tear could not extinguish. Then, when I am softened, calmed, ashamed, and covered with confusion, let him scold me, let him tell me what I have done, and assuredly he will have no reason to complain of me. If it is a question of a trifling detail, which

is not worth clearing up, let him drop it; let the aggressor be the first to hold his tongue, and let him not make it a foolish point of honour always to have the advantage. That is how I wish my friend to act towards me, as I am always ready to act towards him in a similar case.

On this point, I could mention to you a little instance of which you have no suspicion, although it concerns you; it has to do with a note which I received from you some time ago, in answer to another with which I saw you were not satisfied, and in which, as it seems to me, you had failed to understand what I meant. I answered properly enough, or at least I thought so; my reply certainly was in the tone of true friendship, but, at the same time, I cannot deny that there was a certain amount of warmth in it, and, reading it again, I was afraid that you would be no better pleased with it than with the first; immediately, I threw my letter in the fire; I cannot tell you how pleased I felt to see my eloquence consumed in the flames; I said nothing more to you about it, and I believe that I gained the honour of being beaten; sometimes it only needs a spark to kindle a conflagration. My dear, kind friend, Pythagoras said that one should never poke the fire with a sword; this maxim seems to me the most important and the most sacred law of friendship.

I require from a friend even a great deal more than all I have just told you; even more than he must require from me, and than I should require from him, if he were in my place, and I were in his.

As a recluse, I am more sensitive than another man; if I am wrong in my behaviour to a friend, he thinks of it for a moment, and then a thousand distractions cause him to forget it for the rest of the day; but nothing distracts my attention from any wrong done by him to me; I cannot sleep; I think of it the whole night long; when walking by myself, I think of it from sunrise to sunset; my heart has not a moment's respite, and the harshness of a friend causes me, in a single day, years of grief. As an invalid, I have a right to the indulgence which humanity owes to the weakness and temper of a sufferer. Who is the friend, who is the honourable man who ought not to be afraid of grieving an unhappy man tormented by a painful and incurable malady? I am poor, and it seems to me that I deserve considerate treatment on this account still more. All these indulgences that I require you have shown to me without my mentioning them, and surely it will never be necessary for me to ask them from a true friend. But, my dear friend, let us speak frankly; do you know any friends that I have? On my honour, it has been my good fortune to learn to do without them. I know many persons who would not be sorry that I should be under obligation to them, and many to whom in fact I am, but hearts fit to respond to mine—ah! it is enough to know one.

Do not therefore be surprised if my hatred for Paris increases; I get nothing from it but annoyance, with the exception of your letters; I shall never be seen there again. If you wish to remon-

strate with me upon this point, and even as forcibly as you please, you have the right to do so; your remonstrances will be well received and will be—useless; after that, you will abandon them. Do just as you think fit in the matter of M. d'Holbach's book, except as to taking the edition upon your hands; that is a way of getting a book purchased by force, and of putting one's friends under contribution. I do not like anything of that kind.

I thank you for Anson's Voyages; I will send the book back to you next week.

Excuse the erasures; I am writing to you at my fireside, where we are all assembled. The womenfolk are exhausting, in company with the gardener, the history of all those who have been hanged in the country, and to-day's gazette is so full of news, that I do not know what I am saying. Goodbye! my kind friend.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

It is so long since I have heard from you yourself, that I should be very uneasy about your health if I did not know that, with a slight exception, it has been tolerable. I have never liked, between friends, the rule of corresponding punctually, for friendship itself is the enemy of trifling formalities; but the circumstances under which my last letter was written make me somewhat uneasy as to the effect it may have produced upon you, and, if I were not reassured by my

consciousness of my good intention in writing it, I should be afraid that it had displeased you in something. Be sure that, if this is the case, either I have explained myself badly, or you have wrongly interpreted my feelings. As I desire to be esteemed by you, I only intended to make in it my apology in regard to my friend Diderot and other persons who formerly bore this name; and, with the exception of the evidence of my attachment for you, there was nothing in this letter in which I intended to refer to you in the least. Your heart, which is anything but mistrustful, reassures me as well as my own; and I cannot help thinking that, if you had been displeased with me, you would have told me; but, I beg you, in order to calm me completely, tell me that you are not. Good-bye! my kind friend.

You were right in wanting me to see Diderot. He spent the day here yesterday, the most delightful day I have had for a long time. There is no annoyance which can hold out against the presence of a friend.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

No, my friend, your letter has certainly neither displeased nor vexed me; the proof of this is that I have not written to you; neither was it calculated to cause me any unpleasant feeling. I wanted to reply to you somewhat in detail, and I have not had time to do so. That is the reason of my silence.

I think, my friend, that it is very difficult to lay down hard and fast rules as to friendship, for everyone carries them out, as is only reasonable, according to his own way of thinking. You inform me of what you claim from your friends; another of my friends will come who will claim something exactly opposite, so that I, who also have quite a different character, shall find out, ten times a day, the secret of getting myself execrated by my friends, and I, on my part, shall of course send them to the deuce. There are two general points, essential and indispensable in friendship, at which everybody is bound to meet—indulgence and freedom. Without them, there are no bonds which will not break; to this, or almost to this, my code of friendship may be reduced. I cannot require my friend to love me with warmth, with delicacy, with thoughfulness, or an effusive heart, but only to love me to the best of his ability, as far as his natural disposition allows; for all my wishes will never reform him if he is reserved or fickle, grave or gay; and, as my thoughts would incessantly be directed towards that quality which was lacking in him, and which I should persist in wishing to find in him, I should necessarily find him unbearable. One ought to love one's friends as true lovers of art love pictures; their eyes are continually fixed upon their best points, and they are unable to see anything else.

If a quarrel breaks out, you say, if my friend does me an injury, etc., etc. But I don't know what a man means when he exclaims: "My friend does me an injury." In friendship I know only

one kind of injury; that is mistrust. But when I hear you say: "On such and such a day, he behaved mysteriously to me"; on another occasion, "He preferred such and such a thing to the pleasure of my society, or to an attention which was due to me"; or, "He ought to have made such and such a sacrifice for me"; and then comes a fit of sulkiness—come, leave this dealing in trifles and wrangling to empty hearts and heads without ideas; it only suits silly, mean, vulgar lovers who, in the place of that confident security, those delightful outpourings of the heart which in honest and brave souls increase the feeling of love by the exercise of virtue and philosophy, put little false or mean quarrels which narrow the mind, embitter the heart, and make people's characters insipid when they do not make them vicious. Does it become a philosopher, a friend of wisdom, to follow the same career as those faint-hearted and narrow-minded devotees who substitute for the true love of God petty feeble and superstitious practices? Believe me, he who is well acquainted with man readily pardons him for the weaknesses into which he falls, and is infinitely grateful to him for the good he does, which costs him so much.

I think that your code of friendship, after your quarrel with Diderot, is not unlike the regulation which the English nation never fails to make, when any crisis causes it to perceive in its laws a vice which upsets the whole state, and which cannot be remedied for the moment, for want of having been foreseen.

As for me, my friend, after laying down, at the

commencement of my letter, liberty and indulgence as my first principle, I did not foresee that I should make such use of the one and have such need of the other. Excuse my impertinence for the sake of my sincerity. Good heavens! how many more kind things I could say to you, but I am interrupted every minute; I have only time to confide to you in secret that I defy you, in spite of my mischievous pleasantries, to be angry with me; for, notwithstanding your faults, I love you with all my heart.

I was sure that you would be satisfied after you had seen M. Diderot; I do not know why you did not commence your letter with this item; I feel somewhat annoyed at it.

Continuation of the Diary.

Such was the end of the quarrel between Diderot and Rousseau. If the former had introduced less imagination into the interest he takes in the latter, he would have greatly embarrassed him; but he made it possible for him to complain with some kind of reason; I cannot deny it, in spite of the trouble I have taken to persuade Rousseau of the contrary. I must confess that I lead a curious life. I am so fully occupied all day with my friends' quarrels, and the trouble they cause me, that I have, so to speak, only the night left to think of my own affairs.

During the time that this discussion lasted, M. Diderot published his work, which met with great

success. His friend Grimm is far more pleased at it than Diderot himself. The interest he takes in it has extended to me. I feel delighted at this success. I myself have disposed of more than a hundred copies in two days.

I spent my afternoon alone with Monsieur Grimm. He appeared to me so affected and uneasy about my condition that, to oblige him, I at length yielded to the general wish that I should consult a fresh physician who enjoys a great reputation. I hope for no good results from his advice. I should hope for far more from three months of peace and retirement spent with my mother and my dear friend Grimm. If there is a remedy for my condition, it is that, but——

In spite of my great affection for my children, I feel that I must have some time to myself. The happy success of the advice which I have given to Mademoiselle Durand makes the sacrifice less painful to me. She has grasped my ideas perfectly; I felt almost certain that she would. As for my son, he is going through the usual course of insipid school studies, and I sometimes talk to him, to counterbalance, as far as I can, the foolishness of his pedantic tutor Linant.

M. Grimm and myself talked about Rousseau. He declares that he did not show as much warmth in his explanation with Diderot as in the letters which he has written to me on the subject. This conversation led us to various reflections. He made me an answer which struck me by its justice. "I am astonished," I said to him, "that as a rule

men show so little indulgence." "Not so," he replied, "the want of indulgence proceeds from the mistake of thinking ourselves free; the morality established is false and erroneous, in that it proceeds from this false principle of liberty." "I understand that," I said to him, "but the contrary, by making us more indulgent, upsets order." "The contrary upsets nothing. If man does not change, he is subject to modifications—he can be amended; therefore, it is not useless to punish him. The gardener does not cut down the tree which grows crookedly; he binds and forces the branch. Such is the effect of public punishments."

Such was the subject of our conversation. The truth and goodness of this principle of morality have unalterably convinced me.

I should have been very pleased if the opportunity I had had of doing a service to M. Diderot had procured me the acquaintance of so talented a man; but he did not care about it. I must have a well-ordered mind, for I felt more grieved than annoyed. M. Grimm told him that he owed me some thanks, as well as Madame M * * *, who also helped to distribute his work. He begged M. Grimm to undertake the duty for him. M. Grimm represented to him that he might very well take the trouble himself. After great pressing, he confessed the reasons for his dislike to see me; he consented to thank Madame M * * *. As for myself, he said that the opinion he had formed, according to what Duclos (whom he greatly esteems) and others had said, prevents him from

being able to make up his mind to do so. M. Grimm replied that his opinion ought to have as much weight with him as Duclos', and that, when he bestowed his esteem and confidence upon anyone, he might believe that the object of it was sufficiently worthy to deserve the most ordinary courtesies. They had an animated dispute on this subject, which M. Grimm ended by assuring him that it was so much the worse for those who did not do me justice; that I was by no means anxious to extort a vote in my favour which I could do perfectly well without. Since then, there has been a coldness between them. I learned this through Desmahis, who came to see me once or twice after my return from the country. M. Grimm said nothing to me about it. I certainly found him somewhat anxious, and in vain asked him to tell me the reason. As I could not succeed in discovering it, I supposed that it was the bad state of my health which affected him.

Duclos must have prejudiced M. Diderot terribly against me. This circumstance caused me to discover that he and Mademoiselle d'Ette, who could not bear each other when they were my friends, have become most intimate since they have left off seeing me; they vie with each other to see which can do me the most harm. Mademoiselle d'Ette lives in a house where Duclos frequently goes, and where Diderot sometimes visits. There is no doubt that, if all I have been told is true, I am painted in very strange colours.

What pleasure can anyone find in injuring another? What have I done to them all? Never any harm, and often good. This grieves and affects me so keenly, that, without the friend who makes up to me for everything, I feel that I should conceive an aversion for this country. How does it happen that, having nothing with which to reproach myself, never having said or done harm to anyone, I have enemies, and have lost my reputation? M. Grimm always says that it is by excess of kindness and too good a heart that I encourage the ill-disposed to injure me; that, if I let people know me as I really am, I shall put an end to these false rumours. He blames me for allowing my rest to suffer in consequence. He esteems me; he loves me; I have the confession of my conscience for myself; why then should I make myself unhappy at the wrongs done to me by others?

Desmahis seemed to me quite ashamed and confused the first time he visited me; he was more at his ease the second time; but M. Grimm's presence makes him uneasy. He told me that he had strong reasons for suspecting Rousseau of having done me quite as much harm with Diderot as the rest. I cannot endure these vague accusations. I told him so, and I hope that he will say no more about them.

Note from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

My dear hermit, I am sending a few things to Madame and Mademoiselle le Vasseur; and, as the messenger I am employing is a fresh one, the

following is a list of the articles with which he is intrusted: A little barrel of salt,[1] a curtain for Madame le Vasseur's room, and an under-petticoat of my own, quite new (at least, I have never worn it), made of silk flannel, which will do very well to make one for her, or a good waistcoat for yourself. Good-bye, king of bears! will you let me hear something about you?

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

The roads are so bad that I have made up my mind to write to you by the post, and you will be able to do the same, for my letters are brought here from Montmorency, and, in this respect, I am as well off as if I were in the middle of Paris.

It is bitterly cold here; this has begun to diminish my stock of wood rather early, but it proves to me, from the premature appearance of the winter, that, whatever anyone says, this season is no more terrible here than anywhere else, except for the absence of friends; but we can console ourselves with the hope of finding them again in spring, or, at least, of seeing them again; for you have long since taught me that we can find them again, in time of need, at every season.

For God's sake, keep carefully this dear weakness, an unexpected treasure with which Heaven favours you, and of which you have great need; for, if it is a rheumatism for the mind, it is for the

[1] The *gabelle*, or salt-tax, at this time pressed very heavily upon the people: it fixed in arbitrary fashion the amount of salt each householder was bound to buy, and compelled him to buy it, while at the same time it forbade him to part with it if he did not want it.

body a very good plaster for the health. You would want many such rheumatisms to make you impotent; and I would rather that you could move neither hand nor foot—that is to say, write neither poetry nor comedy, than know that you have the headache.

I owe M. Gauffecourt an answer, but I still hope that he will come to receive it in person. While waiting for the *bouts rimés*, he can ask M. Chapuis to send a duplicate of the memoir which I left him. If all this seems clear to you, the rheumatism has got hold of you very strongly.

Apropos of M. Gauffecourt, and his manuscript, when do you wish me to send it back? Do you know that I have been trying for four years to read it without having succeeded? Good-bye, Madame; touch my paw for me to all the society.

The Hermitage, 10 *a.m.*

When I had an almanack and no clock, I used to date from the day of the month; now that I have a clock and no almanack, I date from the hour. I am obliged to tell you, on account of the rheumatism, that this is a way of asking you for an almanack for my new year's present.

The "criminal lieutenant"[1] begs you to accept her respects. Mamma cannot do the same, seeing that she is in Paris, suffering from a severe cold; she expects, however, to return on Monday, and I hope that she will bring me back news of you.

[1] A name given to Thérèse le Vasseur.

I have just received your letter and your parcels. I did not clearly understand the giants of the north and the ice-house, and the goblins and the cream-cups, etc., which makes me understand that you have, in spite of all, inoculated me with your rheumatism; so that you do well to send me, at the same time, your under-petticoat to cure me of it; however, I am afraid it will keep me a trifle too warm, for I have not been used to being so well wrapped up.

Continuation of the Diary.

For the last six days we have hardly ever left our poor friend Gauffecourt, who has had an attack of apoplexy. The news has given me such a shock, that it has made me quite ill. I have concealed from my friend Grimm the great change this event has caused in my health; it is the only secret I can allow myself to keep from him; but his uneasiness would certainly have inclined him to prevent me from devoting my attention to Gauffecourt, and I do not wish to leave him until he is out of danger—indeed, until he is quite free from suffering.

In the evening, I heard through M. d'Épinay of Francueil's return. It is said that he is remarkably well. I confess that, although sincerely glad to know that he is in good health, which assumes that he is happy, I was unable to avoid feeling somewhat pained at his apparently complete forgetfulness of me.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

You are aware, my good friend, of what has happened to our friend Gauffecourt. For the last twelve days he has caused me the greatest uneasiness; he does nothing but cry for you. He has fits of absent-mindedness, but it seems rather memory than presence of mind that he lacks; he is at a loss for words, and is grieved at being unable to find them. He told me yesterday that he had lost his dictionary. I succeeded in making out his meaning by signs; he also wanted me not to leave him. Up to the present time I have been very constant in my attendance upon him, even at the expense of my health. Now that the danger is over, I must think of myself, and I feel that I need rest; but it is painful to me to leave him in his present state, with no one but the physicians and servants, who would really have murdered him if I had left it to them.

I have seen M. Diderot, and, if I had not been an imbecile, he would certainly have dined at my house; but I believe that poor Gauffecourt had inoculated my mind with his gout or rheumatism, and, in the next place, I do not know how to tease or force people, which convinces me that I shall not see him again, in spite of all his assurances that he would call upon me. But I must tell you what took place at the interview. I was troubled about our friend, whom I had left in a dangerous state last evening. I got up early this morning, and went to him before nine o'clock. Baron d'Holbach and M. Diderot were there. The

latter would have left the room directly he saw me; I seized him by the arm and stopped him. "Ah!" I said to him, "chance shall not give me so good an opportunity without my taking advantage of it." He came back, and I can truly say that I never spent two hours more agreeably in my life.

In this letter there are no doubt several faults of spelling, but you will find still more in the plots which I intend to put before you.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

We will say nothing about the under-petticoat; but the salt! Did a woman ever show warmth and prudence at the same time? In the end, you will make me lose my temper, and I shall not recover it again. Have you not done enough for yourself? Now do something for me, and allow yourself to be loved after my fashion.

How good you are with your explanations! Ah, that dear rheumatism! Now that you have explained your note to me, explain the commentary: this ice-house which I understand nothing about occurs again, and, as for myself, I do not know that you have any other ice-house than a collection of French music.

At last, you have seen the man. That is, anyhow, so much gained; for I am of your opinion, and I think that that is all you will get from him. I can guess, however, what a perfumed[1] bear ought to say to you about the effect

[1] The epithet is an allusion to Grimm, who was somewhat of a fop.

of this first conversation; but, as for myself, I think that the Diderot of the morning will always want to go and see you, and that the Diderot of the evening will never have done so. You know well that he also sometimes suffers from rheumatism, and that when he is not soaring on his two mighty wings in the neighbourhood of the sun, he is to be found on a heap of grass, without power to move. Believe me, if you have another under-petticoat to spare, you will do well to send it to him. I did not know that Papa Gauffecourt was ill, and I have been led to expect to see him to-day. If he does not come, what you have told me will make me very uneasy.

Still more plots? Confound the plots!—plan, plan, relantanplan. A plot is no doubt a very fine thing, but compose some details and theatrical scenes: it only needs that to ensure the success of a piece when read, and sometimes even when acted. Heaven preserve you from composing one good enough for that.

I have read your letter over again to look for the errors in spelling, but I have not been able to find a single one, although I have no doubt that they exist. I am not vexed with you for having made them, but rather for having noticed them. I myself intended to make some on purpose to shame you, but thought no more of it when I wrote to you.

Good-bye, my friend of the present, and still more of the future. You tell me nothing about your health, whence I conjecture that it is good.

Talking of health, I do not know if this fragment is properly spelt, but I do not think there is much sense in it. This inclines me to believe that I should have done well to make your underpetticoat into a thick cap instead of a waistcoat, for I feel that it is my brain rather than my heart that is affected by rheumatism.

I wish you would be good enough to ask the tyrant[1] what is the meaning of a parcel he has sent to me, containing two six-franc crowns. This seems to me a pretty considerable payment on account for the games of chess which he is to lose with me.

Diderot is leaving. I have shown him your letter and mine. I told you he has conceived a great regard for you, and will not see you. You have done enough in the matter, even for him. Take my advice and let him go his own way. Madame le Vasseur is a little better.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* ROUSSEAU.

I suspect, my friend, that poor Gauffecourt has some matters to arrange, which he perhaps does not care to confide to anyone but you. He told me yesterday that if he were not afraid of abusing your friendship, he would ask you to come and spend a few days with him. If you are willing to do this service for him and for myself as well, for three or four days, you could take up your quarters at my house or M. Diderot's,

[1] Grimm.

and I would take advantage of the opportunity to rest myself. On Friday morning I will send my carriage to wait for you at M. de Luxembourg's gate, if you accept my offer. I think that if you could see poor Gauffecourt from where you are, you would not be able to refuse the favour he asks of you.

Good-bye! my friend.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

We are three invalids here, and I am not the one who requires the least attention. I shall have to leave, in the depth of winter, in the middle of the forest, the persons whom I have brought here under the promise of never abandoning them. The roads are frightful, and one sinks in them everywhere up to one's knees. It is strange that a poor invalid, overwhelmed by his own ailments, should be the only one out of the more than two hundred friends that M. Gauffecourt had at Paris, that he wants to see. I leave you to think over all that. I will give the next two days to my health and allow the roads time to get harder. If it neither snows nor rains I intend to start on Friday, but I am quite unable to walk as far as Paris, or even Saint-Denis, and the worst of it is that the carriage is bound to do me considerable harm in my present condition. However, if the weather is tolerable, if your carriage is at M. de Luxembourg's gate at eleven o'clock punctually, I will take advantage of it; otherwise, I shall continue my journey as I can, and shall arrive when it pleases God. Further, I

want to be paid for my journey; I ask you for a trifling reward.[1] If you do not grant it to me—you who can do everything—I will never forgive you.

I will dine at your house and sleep at Diderot's. I feel, amidst all my sorrows, a certain consolation at the idea of spending a few peaceful evenings with our poor friend. As for business matters, I understand nothing at all about them. I do not wish to hear anything of the kind spoken about on any consideration; make up your mind in regard to that. I send you a letter and a parcel which I will ask you to forward to Diderot. Good-bye! my kind friend; while quarrelling with you, I pity you, esteem you, and never think without emotion of the zeal and firmness you need, always surrounded by sick or sorrowful friends, whose only source of courage and consolation is to be found in yourself.

Continuation of the Diary.

Rousseau has been unable to resist Gauffecourt's wish to see him. He arrived yesterday, and I am going to profit by the opportunity of his stay to take the rest which I so greatly need. I have not been able to see M. Grimm comfortably, or to talk to him without interruption for more than a week. It was time that this restraint should end.

I have seen Baron d'Holbach nearly every day at Gauffecourt's; I felt more at my ease with him

[1] *Épingle:* literally, "pin-money." The reference is to a post connected with the Excise, which Rousseau desired to obtain for a young man.

than I should have expected, and than I usually feel in the company of those who I know are prejudiced against me; for I cannot flatter myself that Duclos has handled me more gently to him than to so many others. The Baron showed me great attention; he even sent me a hamper of twenty-five bottles of Bordeaux, having heard that I had been ordered to take it, and knowing that I could not get any that was good. To anyone else, I should have written a letter of thanks; but M. Grimm advised me to do nothing which might indicate a wish to become intimate with him, and he took upon himself to express my gratitude to him in the manner he thought best. He declares that the Baron, in spite of his excellent qualities, has the fault of being very inconstant in his likings, and is at the same time liable to fits of ill-temper. M. Grimm thinks it best for me to wait until he makes more definite advances before consenting to make the acquaintance of him and his wife, so as to avoid, subsequently, what he calls his *turlus*.[1] The Baron asked if it was not proper that he should call to know whether I had found his wine good. "There is not the least necessity," replied M. Grimm; "besides, you see her every day at Gauffecourt's, you can ask her when you meet her." "Ah!" said the Baron: "I should like my wife to make her acquaintance, and this is an opportunity of obtaining access to her society."

[1] The word is not to be found in any Dictionary, but is apparently a shortened form of *turlupinades*, "vulgar jokes."

"I have nothing to say to you on that point," replied Grimm, and the subject of conversation changed. Since then, I have neither seen the Baron nor heard anything of him.

M. de Francueil, who arrived five or six days ago, came to see me for a moment yesterday. I had visitors, but I was very pleased with his manner and appearance. I could not help being greatly moved when I saw him; my feelings were those of pleasure mingled with apprehension, and the latter was for a moment the stronger; but I was promptly reassured by finding him such as I wished him to be.

It seems that Rousseau was not long able to put up with the crowd of visitors who are always hovering round Gauffecourt since his restoration to health, if what is so called by the physicians be really such; for my part, it appears to me as painful as his illness. He left him this morning without saying a word, and walked back to the Hermitage; he wrote me a few lines when he left, asking me to let him know the state of the patient's health and of my own.

During one of my visits to Gauffecourt, I met the Baron and thanked him for his wine; he asked permission to come and find out for himself when I had finished it. I told him that I should be delighted to see him, and spoke of other things. The next day he called upon me, and M. Grimm, who came in a little while afterwards, found him with me, apparently quite comfortable and pleased with his visit. I then observed, from Grimm's

expression, how pleased he was to find the Baron sufficiently undeceived in regard to me to come to my house of his own accord. Ah! this valued friend is far more affected than myself by anything that concerns me!

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

You have not informed me whether the physicians have been dismissed. Who could endure the torture of seeing one's friend being slowly murdered every day without being able to put a stop to it? For the love of God, drive them all away, and the Comtes and the Abbés, and the fine ladies—the devil take them all! Then write to me, and, if it is necessary, I promise not to leave him again; but do not make me come for nothing. I am willing to sacrifice my life and health, but at least I should like the sacrifice to be good for something; for, for my part, I am quite convinced that I shall never return to Paris, except to die there. Good-bye! my kind friend.

CONTINUATION OF THE DIARY.

I dined to-day for the first time at Baron d'Holbach's. I am greatly pleased with the tone and conversation of this house. His wife is kind and polite; I think she is also possessed of a great deal of tact. I was presented to M. de Margency, a man of about thirty years of age and weak health, who spends all his time at the Baron's. He is a friend of M. Grimm, and on most intimate terms with Desmahis. I feel it incumbent upon me to know everyone who is a friend of M. Grimm, all who take an interest in him.

CHAPTER XVI (1757).

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. DE LISIEUX.

OH, Monsieur, my good friend, my father, come and support me; encourage me, do not leave me alone. I am afraid of myself; I wish to be generous and I cannot. The satisfaction I feel at the favour which M. Grimm enjoys is hardly sufficient to calm my grief, and cannot make me turn away my eyes from the dangers attached to the distinction which he has received. My weakness is unjust, unreasonable; but can we part from our friends without emotion? Yes, Monsieur, he is leaving; I ought to encourage him in it, I ought to be very glad, I ought—I ought to think and feel and act contrary to nature. No, I cannot. It is impossible for me to write. I feel utterly wretched.

The Duc d'Orléans, to whom M. Grimm had assiduously paid court since the death of the Comte de Frièse, showed increased esteem and sympathy for him. He thought that the war which was going to be waged on land would be a sure means to advance his fortune; and for this reason he summoned him to Saint-Cloud. When he had been introduced into the Prince's cabinet, the latter asked him if he had no other views for his

future career than the philosophical reflections which he might be able to communicate to the public. Then he added: "All the metaphysical reveries in the world will not, believe me, benefit you so much as the employment which I wish to secure for you in the army. It is my business to attach you to it in a suitable manner. I have asked the Maréchal d'Estrées, who is in command, to take you at first as secretary; you know several languages; you will be useful to him. After this campaign, if you like the game, we will do something better for you. If, on the other hand, you find that the bustle of an army does not agree with the repose necessary for your meditations, you can return here and dream at your ease under the shadow of your laurel-trees."

Madame d'Épinay, on hearing these particulars, passed by turns from joy to the most violent despair. However, the excess of her grief was allayed by the hope with which we inspired her, that M. Grimm would get off with one campaign, and that perhaps the Duc might even seriously entertain the idea of establishing him by his side.

Continuation of the Diary.

Baron d'Holbach brought M. de Margency to me yesterday. Gauffecourt has nicknamed him "the Syndic of the *galantins*,"[1] and I think the name wonderfully good. The Baron did not

[1] *Galantin:* a ridiculous, affected lover.

stay long, but M. de Margency, having heard me say that M. Grimm was expected, asked permission to wait for him. He wanted to speak to him about Desmahis, who is more tormented than ever with the idea that M. Grimm is angry with him, and got him to ask again for an explanation; but Grimm, far from giving him one, charged M. de Margency to tell him that, as he had employed in vain every means in his power to calm his apprehensions, nothing remained for him but to renounce his friendship. We agreed that this was really the only way of putting an end to discussions that were as wearisome as they were absurd and chimerical. I spent the rest of the evening with my good friend, my mother and my children.

Thank Heaven, the physicians have declared our dear Gauffecourt to be quite out of danger. For my own part, I am afraid he will feel the effects of this attack to the end of his days; at least, we will do our best to save him.

To-day was the day of the week on which I am at home to my friends. Much was said about Grimm, the kindness shown to him by the Duc d'Orléans, and the hopes with which it may inspire him. "All that is very fine," exclaimed Baron d'Holbach; "but I think he is very foolish to start with so paltry a position as that of secretary; in your place, my friend, I would not leave without a more important post were guaranteed to me on my return." "Not so, Monsieur; even if I am destined to find myself again in the same

position as I am, or even worse, if that is possible," said M. Grimm, "I will accompany the Maréchal." Everybody blamed the Baron's views, but no one felt the impolite side of this opinion. I could not help pointing out to them that M. Grimm had no choice upon the decision he ought to make. Then all exclaimed against the justice of my observations, and the pleasure which this campaign promised. Some one having added that it would be very annoying if M. Grimm could not endure the fatigues of it, he let fall the wish that he could. Was this wish sincere?

Oh, men, how little importance you attach to our fears and grief! I am going to finish my day alone, lamenting my lot; it seems to me that I have nothing else to do. M. Grimm has gone this evening to Saint-Cloud; on leaving me, he shed tears, which consoled me more than all the arguments I can think of.

The Maréchal repeated to M. Grimm the words, so fatal to me: "I take you with me," and added, with a laugh, "I am upsetting your occupations and society a little." How lightly the great trifle with the happiness of individuals! Why need he have laughed when he said that? Have such people no feeling, or are they only affected by what concerns them?

M. Grimm had promised me to return early to-day, but it was past nine o'clock when he arrived. He said that someone, to whom he had something to say, carried him away by the charm of his conversation and detained him. As if there

were a man in the universe who would have the power to detain *me* when he was waiting for me! Ah! if there were, I would have him drowned, for he would have deprived me of the only happiness of my life!

I spent my day *en famille*, in order to complete an important matter of business for the Comtesse d'Houdetot. Her husband is serving as major-general. He wanted his wife to go, according to custom, and shut herself up on the estate during the war. We were all opposed to this, and her ill-health furnished a very valid excuse to justify refusal on her part; but, as the distance of the estate was the only reason for her dislike to live there, we induced her husband to take a little country house for her near Paris. He preferred one between the Hermitage and La Chevrette. The rent is only 500 livres, and, poor as the place is, she is happy in the possession of it and has the good sense to be satisfied with it. It is so easy to make her happy, that one must needs be very harsh and unjust to refuse to do so.

Continuation of the Diary.

How hard I find it to resign myself! how weak and feeble I am! I feel, in regard to M. Grimm's departure, as one feels in regard to a friend who is dangerously ill. The physician arrives. "Do not deceive yourself," he says, "there is no hope for your friend, except by a miracle of which we know no instance." We are utterly wretched, but we

wait for the miracle, and still hope. Alas! in eight or ten days he will no longer be here!

I saw Diderot to-day at Baron d'Holbach's. He paid me so many compliments, and made so many insipid remarks about the sway I exercised over my friends, that I am perfectly convinced that he judges me to be exactly the opposite of what I am. The desire of subduing is quite foreign to me, and I have no ambition for the reputation of it. I have tried, as skilfully as I can, to make him understand this; perhaps he will only consider it an additional proof of my cunning.

On my return home I found a letter from Rousseau, whom I had informed of M. Grimm's approaching departure. "I offer my compliments to my old friend Grimm," he said, "but the favour of the great always entails inconveniences; apparently he has cleverly combined what suits him. I pity him more than you, Madame."

Note from MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM, *on the day of his departure.*

11 *a.m.*

I have already spent an hour with you, and, in two hours from now, I shall see you no more. You promised to see me again, my friend; indeed, I have a number of important things to say to you, and to ask you. I should like to speak to you, to write to you; words fail me. My friend, be careful of yourself; that is all I can say to you. It is my

happiness that I intrust to you—yes, my happiness, my sole happiness. Make yourself easy about me; I will take all the care of my health that you deserve that I should take. I could not help writing this note to you while you were dressing, and I cannot help sending it to you, if only to tell you again that I am expecting you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Oh, how cruel friends are! The Baron, Monsieur de Margency, the Marquis de Saint-Lambert, the Comtesse d'Houdetot, have all hastened to me. "What! has he gone?" "Oh! but of course he has." Then followed regrets and praises. How cold all these people are, and how feebly they express themselves in comparison with the feelings of my heart! They took up their quarters, tried to console me, to help me, but I did not do them justice until after they had left. As we are going to La Chevrette in a few days, I began to pack up my books and papers. They assisted me, and that amused me for a moment, as it made me believe that I also was going to start, and that I should find you again somewhere. The moment I was alone I ran to your house. I had a presentiment that I should only feel well there. Would you believe that it was only at the end of half an hour that I observed the letter addressed to me which you had left there? So that was the reason why no one was to be allowed enter your rooms? How

I thank you, my friend! How kind and consoling is this letter! Yes, I will carry over my heart, during all the time you are absent, this precious pledge of your affection and care for me, as tender as they are inexhaustible. After having read it over ten times, I finished by putting your writing-table and desk in order. I have been to say good-night to my mother, and I am going to spend the rest of my day with my children.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Before starting.

My precious friend, I shall be far from you when this note will recall to your mind how my heart is occupied with it. It is with the deepest regret that I leave you and renounce for a time the happiness of living near you. But, my friend, we cannot be altogether unhappy at an event which is quite in order, and which every man's duty demands. Since I have adopted France as my country, I am bound to serve her. How unjust you are if you still accuse me of ambition! Trust to me only to do what I cannot avoid without a want of self-respect. I thank you for the note which you have just sent me. I feel only too strongly from experience, my dear friend, that we must pardon each other for the weakness of the first moment: feeling has rights, the effects of which must be cherished. That which you show towards me is very precious to me, but its limits

must not be extended so far as to make you exaggerate your misfortune, and become, in consequence, incapable of submitting to the duty imposed by your vocation. It is your duty to keep yourself for your mother, your children, and your most affectionate friend. Remember that his happiness is bound up with your well-being and preservation. Recall to mind frequently, I entreat you, the subject and result of our last conversations. Consider how greatly you need courage, firmness, and loftiness of mind to ward off all the awkwardnesses of your position. My friend, tears will not help you to acquire the energy which is necessary to you. Do not allow your husband to do any injustice to your children or servants; rather submit to those which he may do to you, if their consequences are not too serious, and if they can secure you repose. Such, in general, is the part which it becomes you to play. Besides, I leave you surrounded by good friends; it only rests with yourself to lead a very happy and pleasant life. The Baron's society is very select; you are in request there; and, since people know how to appreciate you, I see no objection to your enjoying it. You can only gain, all of you, by becoming better acquainted, especially if my dear friend will be good enough not to forget that unlimited confidence is not due to all her friends. A little prudence on this point may be recommended to a heart as upright and sincere as yours without wounding it. You can get a great deal out of Margency; he is amiable and amusing. I am

surprised that you did not reply with greater alacrity to the kind attentions of the Marquis de Croismare, and that you received him so coldly when he was presented to you; he is a man of distinguished merit. I should be very glad to see him established as one of your friends. Will you tell me, in your spare moments, your opinion of them all? Forget what we have said about them, and judge of them by yourself; no intellectual idleness, if you please. Good-bye, good-bye, then, my friend! How delightful it was to me to utter the word every evening, and how painful it is to me now!

I will embrace you for the last time for six months!

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I cannot get used to it; I do not believe that I ever shall. Ten times this morning I was nearly sending to you. I pity you, my friend, almost as much as myself. You will be surrounded by people who will not heed your sadness. As for me, I am somewhat compensated by the general approbation which I hear from all quarters, of the Duc d'Orléans' kindness to you; but also, the more I see you are loved, the greater fear I have of those who are envious of you.

Well, my friend, you want me to say to myself: "He is fulfilling his vocation; we are submitting to our destiny." How weak are these arguments, and what little influence they still have upon me! You are so sensible, so stern, that

I must have a great amount of confidence in you, and be in the habit of telling you everything, to venture to disclose to you all the folly of my heart. As you once told me, I believe that I shall continue a child until my second childhood. My friend, I am so childish that I am proud of it. I find it hard to forgive you for refusing me a certain likeness which is banished to your anteroom. It is true that it has rather a grimacing expression; but I should have derived great benefit from this grimace; I should have kept looking round me to see if I had said or done something wrong. But let us leave your portrait, my heart, and my folly. I mean to keep you so well informed of all that interests us, that you may at times be able to believe that you have not left us.

I received a note from M. d'Épinay this morning, without any address. He instructs me to have the works resumed at the château, which he had ordered to be suspended, but only to have eight suites of rooms finished. He wants me to go and settle there at Midsummer, and to let La Chevrette for this quarter. I am greatly displeased at this; it will deprive me of every moment of quietness, while rest is the only comfort for which I am anxious. The Baron, who was at my house when I received these instructions, is very desirous of renting La Chevrette. Unless his wife offers any objection, I think it may be looked upon as settled.

So you want to know what I think of the

Baron's friends? Up to the present, they seem to me very agreeable; but, my friend, I shall not have great difficulty in judging of them for myself, and what you have told me of them will not greatly assist my sagacity; for, with the exception of the Marquis de Croismare, I do not think that you have spoken to me of any one of them in particular. If you have, I do not recall it to mind; and yet it rarely happens that I forget what you say to me.

Pardon me, I have really specially distinguished the Marquis de Croismare; he is the one of the whole company who pleases me most. I must tell you that, after he had several times asked permission to call upon me, I perhaps gave him reason to think that I did not show any very great eagerness in the matter; but that arose from the sort of indifference which I have felt for some time towards everyone who is not yourself. I have made amends for the wrong, and, since you left, he has been to see me every day. His character is so open, that there is no need to observe him long in order to know him. It seems to me that he combines great shrewdness with great frankness. The following is the portrait I should draw of him, as much from what you have told me as from what I have seen of him myself.

Portrait of M. LE MARQUIS DE CROISMARE.

I believe he is fully sixty years of age; however, he does not look it. He is of medium height; his face must have been very pleasant; it is fur-

ther distinguished by an air of nobility and ease, which sheds a charm over his whole person. His features exhibit shrewdness. His gestures and attitudes are never affected; but they are so perfectly in harmony with the bent of his mind, that they seem to add to his originality. He speaks of the most serious and most important matters in a tone of such gaiety, that one is sometimes tempted not to believe a word he says. There is hardly anything worth quoting in what he says; but, when he is speaking, one is anxious not to lose a word; and, when he is silent, one would like him to speak again. His prodigious liveliness, and a singular aptitude for all kinds of learning and accomplishments, have led him to a sight and a knowledge of everything; whereby you can understand that he is very well informed. He has read well, and observed well; and he has only retained what was worth preservation. At first sight, his mind seems to show more agreeableness than solidity, but I think that anyone who should judge him to be frivolous would do him a wrong. I suspect that he shuts up in his study the thorns of the roses which he distributes in society; consistently gay in the world, I believe he is melancholy when alone. It is said that his heart is as affectionate as it is honourable; that he is a man of lively feelings and that he abandons himself with impetuosity to all that finds the way to his heart. Everybody does not please him; for that, originality, distinguished virtues, or certain vices which

he calls passions, are necessary; nevertheless, in the course of life, he accommodates himself to everything. Great curiosity and an easy-going disposition, amounting to weakness, often lead him to neglect and lose sight of his best friends, in order to abandon himself to unreal and passing tastes, at which he laughs with them; but it is so easy to see that he blushes for them to himself, that it is impossible to be angry at his incongruities.

It is you, my friend, whom I now ask if that is not the Marquis de Croismare; at least, that is my opinion of him; at the end of the campaign I will tell you whether I have changed that opinion. I have given him a pressing invitation to come here, and he has promised to do so. M. de Margency, to whom I have made the same proposal, has taken me at my word, and even intends to settle at my house; I think I can guess his reasons, but we will speak of him another time. I have compliments and expressions of friendship without number to give to you; everyone would like to be mentioned individually; let that suffice once for all. Good-bye, my dear friend, I am going to dine at the Baron's. To-morrow we start for La Chevrette. I will write to you if I can.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

I took leave of my friends yesterday, and to-day I have shut myself in, to attend to my affairs

and talk to you at my ease. I am sending all my visitors away this evening. I shall go with my children to supper at my mother's, and start early to-morrow morning; they are coming in the afternoon to see me with her. You have no idea how delighted my little ones are to go out to supper; it is quite natural at their age. Still less have you any idea of the satisfaction their delight causes me; I would not exchange this evening for many others which might seem more noteworthy. I am surrounded by a perpetual source of happiness, which I do not know how to enjoy sufficiently. I owe to you a great many discoveries of this kind, my friend, which are very precious to me; if I am unable at the present moment to enjoy them without alloy, they will at least help me to support a privation which is necessary, but at the same time very cruel.

Yesterday, at the Baron's, I saw M. de S * * * who starts to-day to join your army. I have given him my letter, which you will thus receive sooner than by the post, because he is going directly to the place where you are. The Marquis de Croismare has given him some money for his brother, who will be also with you immediately. I think the bargain in regard to La Chevrette will be concluded with the Baron; his wife seems to me so utterly indifferent about the whole affair that she will put no obstacle in the way. Margency is delighted; for as Madame de Verdelin's estates are only about two leagues from mine, it will be very convenient for him.

Really, if I did not see that you were all agreed in believing Margency to be as good and honourable as he is amiable, I should have thought he was an ill-natured coxcomb; at any rate, he is flighty and indiscreet. I had often heard him speak of the Demoiselles d'Ars; and he had read to us some letters from the elder, very well written, but very impassioned. From this I had concluded that Madame de Verdelin was his mistress; and, as I hardly ever trouble about other peoples' business, I had remained of that opinion. I was astonished to learn, quite by accident, that she was a lady of position, very pretty, very amiable, and very sensible, against whom nothing can be said except that she has been so unfortunate as to conceive for M. de Margency a violent passion, to which she sacrifices everything. Ah, well! there is a woman compromised, even ruined, by a bad choice! She is said to have resisted his advances for a long time; for everything that concerns them is known.

It is said that the attempt has several times been made to get her to understand that she was being compromised by Margency; she has always refused to listen to a word of complaint against him. That is very admirable, but very foolish. Her sister is her confidante; but this woman is none the less unhappy for it. It is in vain that she has made Margency her idol, and laid all her troubles before him as before her God; for her husband is an old man, blind of one eye, infirm, worthless in every sense of the word,

jealous, and tyrannical. She is in no way compensated. It is asserted that Margency, while he does justice to Madame de Verdelin's merits, is, however, only mildly in love with her. Nevertheless, she seems satisfied; she says that she loves him for himself, and that, provided he is happy, she desires no more. Is this sentiment quite just? I am far from such perfection; I do not think it is natural. This woman must be very romantic. The happiness of two persons who love each other is so closely connected, that it is only one. Mutual sacrifices may be made to reason, fortune, and honour, but the delight is the same. No doubt, we are also desirous of the complete happiness of the object of our affections, but we desire him to be happy through us; that is a right of which we are jealous in proportion as we are happy through him, and, when one of the two parties concerned has renounced it, there is no longer happiness or repose. The kind of calmness which is the result of time is a nothingness, which is to be feared a thousand times more than death. Oh, my friend! you who are no doubt commissioned by Heaven to illumine my soul and give a charm to my life, we have no such sudden changes to fear. You will keep to your work. I shall always adore and revere the source of my progress, and nothing in the universe shall ever be able to alter or break the bond which unites us.

My mother, whose whole thoughts are de-

voted to amusing me, has, I believe, persuaded the Baron and his wife to invite me to Chantilly. I presume that it is she, because of her eagerness that I should accept the invitation. They are to take me to Chantilly at the end of next week, with the Marquis de Croismare. Margency said that he would like to be of the party. "All right," replied the Baron, with an air of ill-humour; "but don't go and chatter about this plan with your old one-eyed friend. We wish to be by ourselves; a small party, free and unrestrained. So, my friend, for once in your life, I beg of you, put your tongue in your pocket." While laughing at this speech, M. de Margency promised so quietly to hold his tongue that, I suppose, he is accustomed to the Baron's attacks, and deserves them.

The Comtesse d'Houdetot came to say good-bye to me yesterday. What a pretty soul she is—simple, sensitive, and honest! She is intoxicated with joy at her husband's departure, and really she is so interesting, that everybody is delighted at it for her sake. She was as mad as a young puppy yesterday. The Marquis de Saint-Lambert was with her; he sends you a thousand compliments. He told me of a very amusing remark he made to Rousseau during his last visit to Paris. "Would you like to know," said the Marquis to him, "the difference between the feelings of friendship which unite us? I cherish the need which my heart has of you, while you are sometimes embarrassed by

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that I should accept the invitation.

We wish to be by our
pocket." While laughing at this speech, M. de

Chantilly

Engraved by J. C. Varrail after picture by Eugene Lami

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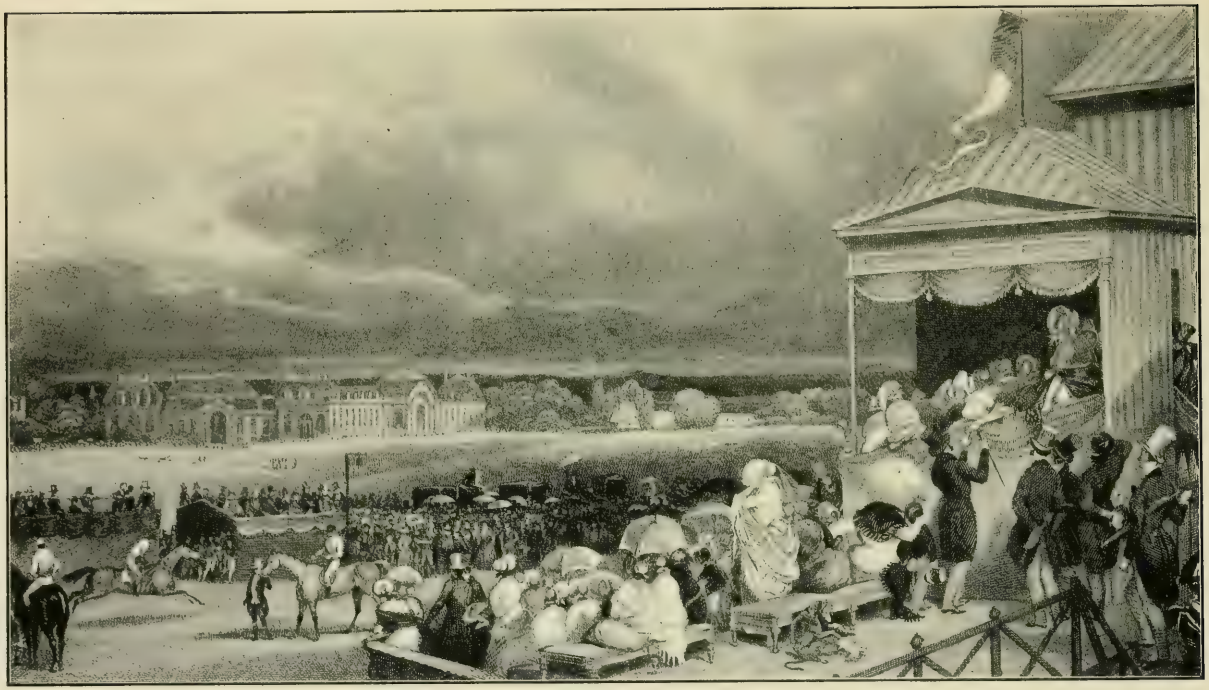

the need you may have of me." That must have pricked him, for it is true.

The time I had set apart for you has already elapsed, and it seems to me that I have hardly said anything to you. Adieu! my good friend. I count the days of your absence, and I impatiently await the messenger who is to bring me news of you.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

La Chevrette.

On our arrival here the day before yesterday, we found Rousseau awaiting us; he was calm and in the best temper in the world. He brought me an instalment of a romance which he has commenced this winter. He is going to leave it with me for a few days, for I cannot yet read or form an opinion of it. He returned to the Hermitage yesterday evening in order to continue this work, which he says constitutes the happiness of his life. You see clearly from this information that, whatever opinion I form of it, I shall be careful to avoid destroying a chimera which is so dear to him.

We were somewhat silent at breakfast this morning; we all felt that someone was missing. Pauline was the first to say so. Already she finds your absence too long; none of us is accustomed to go for three days without seeing you. Mamma has delivered a little lecture to us upon the caprice of destiny which mocks at will at our schemes for

happiness. Pauline asked her what destiny was. She replied: "My child, it is for every one of us the result of the events which it pleases God to link together, according to the order which he prescribes." You can well imagine that she did not understand this definition in the least. It made her thoughtful. She asked her brother if he understood it. My son boldly answered that he did. "Well then," she said to him, "explain it to me, for it is no use my thinking, I can't understand it one bit." This ingenuousness amused us. My son coughed, hemmed and hawed, blushed, and ended by saying that he understood quite well what my mother had said, but that he did not know how to set about explaining it. "If that is the case," said Pauline, "you do not understand it." "That is no argument," replied my mother; "could you explain everything that you think you know well enough to make anyone, who had no idea of it, understand it?" "I think so," she answered, "if I understand it thoroughly." "Well, sister," rejoined my son, "tell me what it is to have *esprit*." "To begin with, brother, I did not tell you that I thoroughly understood the meaning of the term; but I think it consists in thoroughly understanding what others say, and in not giving a wrong explanation of one's thoughts."

After she had given this answer, she began to laugh maliciously. "My daughter," I said to her, "this definition is not wrong, but it is not absolutely correct; my children, you must not

rack your brains in the endeavour to understand things that are beyond your age and capacity; you would be in danger of adopting false or imperfect ideas. There is so much preliminary knowledge to be acquired before you come to questions of this kind, that I advise you to give up the idea of investigating this one, for some time as yet. Always ask questions; that is very proper and necessary; but determine to believe only what you have no difficulty in understanding, in the explanations we give you; in regard to the rest, suspend your opinion and your judgment." "What I have told you," rejoined my mother, "amounts to this: you must learn to pray to God without ceasing to shield us from misfortune." "And," I added immediately, "as it would show very foolish pride to believe that God would change the order of his decrees at the entreaty of an atom such as man is, we must pray to Him to give us the courage and firmness necessary to enable us to submit to events which we cannot prevent." My mother did not seem very edified at this additional remark of mine; but happily Pauline diverted her attention by some other questions. "What is an atom?" she asked. My son showed her some in the rays of the sun; and my mother did not fail to add, "And we are all atoms in the sight of God."

It would have been easy to prove the contradiction between this explanation and the first proposition, but I should have been sorry to

have done so; a worthy mother like mine does not deserve to be humiliated. I must finish my foolish talk and tell you Pauline's epigram. "What, brother!" she cried, "so you are an atom!" "Yes, sister." "Then there are some very big atoms!"

This was how our morning was spent. M. de Margency, who arrived yesterday evening, was not present at breakfast. He came down later to read me some verses which he has written for Madame de Verdelin's *fête*. They are pretty, but, although her jealous husband has only one eye, he will easily see through them.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

Evening.

The Baron is one of the greatest originals I know. He came to dinner here to tell me that he abandoned the idea of renting my house for reasons which could not possibly be changed; and, two hours later, he tormented me to sign the lease. It came about as follows:

He had promised me his decision within a few days, when I left Paris. He came this morning. He did not say a word about the house, and I saw that he was embarrassed. At last I broke the silence and asked him what he intended to do. "Alas!" said he, with an utterly disconcerted air, "it is impossible for me to take a country-house." "Why so?"

"Because I have never had one; it would bewilder my friends. I want to live as I please; I do not want to live here to keep open house, and I should run the risk of being alone in the winter." "What folly! do you intend to live there like a perfect hermit, and not even to see your friends?" "No; but—I give up the idea with great regret—but it cannot be helped."

Then he pulled a face a yard long. "Come," said I, somewhat annoyed, "let us think no more about it, and, above all, say no more about it." "That is the best plan," said he, "since I must give up the idea, for I do not know a more enchanting house. What a prospect! What gardens! What a view! And the water! and the rich meadows! The high road a few yards off! A charming neighbourhood! Here you are in touch with everything, and the house is sufficiently isolated to live alone if one wants. There is a point of view down below; do you know, it is exactly like an English garden."

I made no answer, and went on with my work. He went up to the window, and, leaning on the balcony, reflected for fully a quarter of an hour, his opera-glass in his hand. Then he came towards me, saying: "Well, won't you say anything to me? I should very much like to take the house, but they will make my life a curse." "Who?" "Well, zounds! I must tell you the truth; I know what is at the bottom of it all; there are certain persons who are displeased at our intimacy. You are annoyed, I see it clearly; but I could not tell

you so all at once." "And why not, Monsieur, if it is neither Madame nor yourself who are displeased? It seems to me it matters little." "That is true, but there will be bother and unpleasantness." "What, Monsieur, do you not know how to show a will of your own?" "I know very well, but—I do not want to quarrel with anybody; they are my friends, I do not want to quarrel with my friends. Suppose I take this house, and they refuse to come here?" "Monsieur le Baron, settle it with your wife and your friends, and rest assured that, if you do not take my house, I shall not be annoyed."

I did not think it necessary to say anything more. I was perfectly aware that it was M. Diderot who threw obstacles in the way of the arrangement. After dinner the Baron suddenly came up to me and said: "My mind is made up, Madame; let us draw up the agreement and sign." I wanted to give him twenty-four hours longer; there was no means of drawing back. We have signed the agreement, and he has made me promise to go to Paris on Monday to draw up the lease.

After dinner we read Rousseau's manuscript. I do not know whether I am ill-disposed, but I am not satisfied with it; it is wonderfully well written, but it is too elaborate, and seems to me to be unreal and wanting in warmth. The characters do not say a word of what they ought to say; it is always the author who speaks. I do not know how to get out of it; I should not like

to deceive Rousseau, and I cannot make up my mind to grieve him.

Our visit to Chantilly is broken off, my friend; the Comtesse d'Houdetot heard of the project, and immediately wanted to make one of the party, which decided the Baron to give it up. I am not particularly sorry about it. Good-night! my friend; I have heard nothing from you. Alas! there will come moments more disquieting and harder to endure.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

*R***.*

I salute my dear friend. I am just starting. My heart has not left you. Take care of your health; that is the most precious of all the marks of affection that you can show me. We continue our journey without stopping. How long it is since I saw you! I hope you are thinking about yourself; that is some slight consolation for me. I do not know if this letter will reach you. Adieu!

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Here I am at Metz. To tell the truth, I have made the whole journey without knowing where I was or where I was being taken. My dear friend, you no doubt miss the man who is more attached to you than anyone else in the world, but you cannot pity him sufficiently, of that I am sure. You cannot imagine how I suffer at being deprived of the pleasure of seeing you constantly. I

shall spend whole months without enjoying this satisfaction; as a further misfortune, I foresee that I shall not have a single moment to myself; I shall be little with you, never with myself. Comfort me, my dear friend, in every way that you know is most essential to my peace of mind. Let your letters speak to me incessantly of yourself, your family, your interests, the precautions you take for your health, and their success. You are always present to me; I tremble for you, and I am not always successful in reassuring myself.

You do not know, my friend, that I left Paris very ill. Before I went to your house the second time, I found myself so unwell that I did not know whether I should be able to start; all that has past, and has resulted in nothing but my usual ailments. How I long to hear from you! I do not know at all, for instance, what you are going to do to-morrow. Since I have known you that has never happened to me. We are going to continue our journey. Good-bye! my dear friend; remember all you have promised me, and since my happiness is so essentially bound up with your life, do your utmost to preserve it. My respects and compliments, etc.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

My friend, the few lines written from R*** have given me more pleasure and are more precious to me even than your letter dated from Metz, which I received at the same time. If

you knew how grateful I am for everything that you do for me! I believe that I should have died of uneasiness if I had known that you were ill when you set out. My friend, can you assure me that your illness has had no ill results? I believe you, but I want you to tell me again.

I have just come from Paris; the lease is signed. I have many things to tell you, but, to prove to you what care I take of myself, I am putting off writing to you till to-morrow. I am going to see my mother and children again, to let Rousseau know that I have returned, and to rest for the remainder of the day. I wanted to send you these few words; otherwise, I should have been ill at ease.

CONTINUATION OF THE SAME LETTER.

6 *a.m., the following day.*

I feel to-day, more than I have done for the last two months, that I am alive. It is the loveliest weather imaginable; the sky is clear, the country is so beautiful! Its calm and silence are so perfectly in harmony with my soul. I feel carried away above myself. Ah! surely I shall have another letter from you to-day; I shall abandon myself to all the delight of this expectation.

Oh! my only friend, I write to you when I wake in the morning. I only see daylight again to regret you; that is the first emotion of my soul, the first thought of my mind. Solitude and tranquillity are resources still left to me, of

which you are deprived. Will nothing, then, comfort you but hearing frequently from me? If I thought so, I would write to you continually; but you prescribe limits to my zeal, and you are the absolute master of my will. I have to tell you about my trip to Paris.

When I arrived at the Baron's house, he had a bad cold; he had been suffering from fever, and had just been bled. His wife was with him. I paid her a trifling compliment as to the pleasure it would afford me to have her in my neighbourhood; she replied coldly, after her usual manner, but politely. The Baron sent her away to dress. We read over the lease; I signed it for my husband, in accordance with his written authorisation. Afterwards he confirmed my suspicion, and told me that it was Diderot who had been opposed to his renting my house, and that, having heard that the matter had been settled, he had visited him the day before to tell him all that he had in his mind against me. The Baron spared me the details, but he allowed himself to attack my old friends so vigorously, that I suspect Duclos still continues to work secretly against me. He declares that Desmahis, and even Margency, have equally spiteful tongues; they do not, perhaps, intend to do any harm, but both have a mania for discussing what they see and what they hear.

I contented myself with thanking the Baron for the interest he displayed in me, adding that, happily, it was not necessary for me to conceal

what I did or what I thought; besides, so much the worse for those who abused my frankness. I suspected, I told him further, that M. Diderot had certain reasons for making such a show of avoiding me. It is no doubt very unfortunate that I have been so unfavourably represented to the mind of a man whom I esteem and of whom I think so highly, but I cannot help it. I can only hope that time will efface this bad impression.

I see, besides, from all that escaped the Baron, that, in Diderot's opinion, I am a coquette, false, and intriguing. If he believes me to be so, it is quite consistent on his part to refuse to see me. Very well; but how can a man allow himself to depict in such black colours one whom he does not know, on simple hearsay? In spite of the good I have heard of him, I should be justified, from his conduct towards me, in believing him to be spiteful, a caviller, and I know not what besides. He has spoken ill of me to you — I know it, although you have never said anything to me about it— to the Baron, and perhaps many others; but I will be careful not to judge him or anyone else, unless I am personally acquainted with them.

This fresh annoyance has caused me some disagreeable reflections, my friend; I cannot conceal them from you. It seems hard to understand why Diderot should be the only man who has so unfavourable an opinion of me. According to the idea of him which you have given me,

it must even be pretty generally established for him to allow himself to speak of it. My friend, forgive my apprehensions; I have sufficient esteem for myself not to doubt that I still retain yours; but the unpleasantness of being so intimately connected with anyone who has so bad a reputation! Can that have been the cause of the reserve with which I have sometimes reproached you? I do not dare to linger upon this idea; it would be too overwhelming. One word more: whatever feelings my reputation may arouse in you, you owe it to me to declare them. I do not think that I have anything further to say on this matter. Good-bye! my dear friend. Did I tell you that I had brought back the Marquis de Croismare? He stays with us till to-morrow. They are waiting for me at breakfast. Adieu!

It was, in fact, Duclos who, having heard that the Baron had made Madame d'Épinay's acquaintance, tried to persuade Diderot to get it broken off. As he knew that the Baron was very susceptible to infatuation, he was afraid that M. d'Épinay might endeavour to deprive him of the entry to his house, which was now almost the only one open to him. With this idea in his head, he went to Diderot. "Look here," he said, "is Baron d'Holbach going to strike up an acquaintance with Madame d'Épinay?" "Yes," answered Diderot. "Has she already dined

there?" "Yes, more than once." "And you have seen her?" "Certainly." "Have you lost your senses, Diderot? What, zounds! are you going to allow a lost woman to gain a footing with your friend's wife?" "How can I help it, if you please? It is not my business; I hate cavilling and tittle-tattle; leave me alone, Duclos; I do not want to hear anything about all that." "Eh! well, why didn't you say so? Madame d'Épinay has fascinated you; I am not surprised at it; you will add to the number of her triumphs; but it will be painful; before long, you will see that I am right." "Good heavens, Duclos! let me alone, I tell you; do not make me say what I do not want to say, and believe, once for all, that when people take me for a dupe—it is not always I who am the dupe." "If you are not, why not speak to the Baron? It is a duty that friendship demands." "In that case, Duclos, why don't you speak to him yourself?" "I am not his friend; I do not even know him sufficiently well. Besides, I have quarrelled with Madame d'Épinay, and, then, you must feel that what is a duty for you would seem an act of rudeness on my part, and that does not suit me; but Madame d'Épinay is so generally decried, that unless a man has, like myself, reasons of delicacy which prevent him from speaking, upon my honour, it is inexcusable for him to hold his tongue. Her adventures with me are not known; she can say nothing about them, deny them, or confess them, just as she pleases; but so many others are such common

property, that her reputation would be equally ruined, even if she could clear herself of her connection with me."

Diderot, bored by this conversation, declared to Duclos that he would never be the informer against a woman whom he did not know personally. It did not matter that Duclos was suspected by him; his last observation had struck him. Besides, the latter was clever enough to leave Madame d'Épinay out of the question, and to fall back upon the objections arising from the Baron's character, his infatuation, his inconsistencies. He described him as deserting his old friends; he even depicted his wife as neglected and jealous, and dying of grief; Grimm betrayed and embroiled with the Baron; lastly, he finished the picture by saying to Diderot: "Perhaps you might have been able to keep off and prevent all these misfortunes by a word; you do not consider it your duty to do so; there is no more to be said; you are the only judge of what it becomes you to do. Good-bye! my friend; at least, you see that my motive was honourable, and was well worth the trouble of my having an explanation with you."

He left Diderot in a state of most cruel perplexity. The result of his reflections was, that he came to the conclusion that it was his duty to hold his tongue, and that he would do so until further orders. But, when he reached the Baron's house the same evening, he found him so enchanted with Madame d'Épinay, so intoxicated

with the pleasure her conversation afforded him, so fully determined to rent her house and take up his quarters there immediately, that he forgot all his reflections, and no longer saw anything but an abyss yawning beneath the Baron's feet. Nevertheless, he attempted to discover his wife's feelings. She had no decided opinion in the matter, for it was part of her plan of conduct towards her husband to show none. Diderot took her silence for a sure indication of her displeasure. Duclos' predictions came back to his mind; he believed that he was going to be obliged to see Madame d'Épinay frequently. The idea that he would be obliged to share her offences, or to plunge a dagger into Grimm's heart, offered itself to his imagination; his head warmed his heart, and decided him to take the Baron aside and swear to him that he would never set foot in his country-house. The latter, not knowing what to make of his whim, forced him to give his reasons for it; and then Diderot was obliged to confess to him all the idle fancies upon which it was based. We have already seen, and we shall see again later, from the letters of Madame d'Épinay and M. Grimm, the result of these artfices. It was not discovered until much later that Rousseau might have had a hand in them, even if he did not act openly; but what is certain is, that he secretly employed every imaginable means to prevent M. Diderot from becoming intimate with Madame d'Épinay.

From ROUSSEAU *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY

Although I am not afraid of the heat, it is so fearful to-day that I have not the courage to undertake the journey in the blazing sun. I have merely walked round my house in the shade, and I am in a violent perspiration. I must therefore beg you to express my regret to my pretended *confrères;* and as, since the time they have become "bears," I have become quite gallant, be pleased to allow me to kiss your hand with the greatest respect.

Since I cannot see you to-morrow, I will leave it till Friday, if it is fine, and I will start early.

From MADAME D'ÉPINAY *to* M. GRIMM.

My dear friend, we spent yesterday in talking of you and regretting your absence. I must confide to you that, after I had taken the Marquis de Croismare back in the evening, I went for a walk alone, and I could not restrain my tears when I thought of the life you are going to lead, and how much more you are to be pitied than myself. I also wept when I reflected that I should not see you again this year. Do not reproach me, my dear friend; my poor heart must be allowed a few more weaknesses than yours. If possible, run no risks, and I will be very reasonable.

I send you a note which I received two days ago from Rousseau. It is of no importance, but it will serve to keep you informed of everything. He came yesterday. When we were alone, I

asked him if he had seen Diderot again. "No," he answered, "he proposed to come, but he will not. Besides, he has something far better to do; he must be at everybody's disposal, except mine." "What," I rejoined, "is there anything fresh? His time, as you know, is not always at his disposal, and he has not the necessary facilities." "Ah!" said he tenderly, and with an air of being deeply moved, "let him come or not, we love each other just the same; we feel so sure of each other, our friendship is so firmly established, that it is proof against anything that may happen."

I was utterly amazed at this affectionate declaration. "I believe it," I said to him, "and, for your sake, I hope you may be always convinced of it." I gave him back the MS. which he had intrusted to me, and let him see what I thought of it, with the greatest possible consideration. He did not seem hurt by it; however, instead of staying several days with us, he left when dinner was over, expressing his sorrow at leaving us in exaggerated terms. My mother has never liked him much, as you know, but I am terribly alarmed that she may conceive a decided antipathy against him. As for Margency, he laughs at everything; it was very amusing to hear him and my mother on this point. The end of their conversation brought us back to him who commands our united suffrages.

The Comtesse d'Houdetot came to supper with us yesterday, and brought her fat Madame de Blainville. The former came in like a mad-

woman, the latter like a fool; the Marquis de Saint-Lambert was with her; he came to tell me of his departure for the army. Madame d'Houdetot is in despair about it; she did not expect this separation. In vain we assured her that there were no important events to be expected in the direction where Saint-Lambert is going; the liveliness of her imagination and the sensitiveness of her soul cause her to see everything in the worst light. She cannot control herself, and allows her grief to be seen with a frankness which, although at bottom very estimable, is nevertheless embarrassing for those who take an interest in her. I fancied I saw that there was an arrangement between her and her sister-in-law to make me acquainted with Madame de Verdelin: I answered in such a manner as to make them abandon it. Perhaps the Comtesse is being made to act without any suspicion on her own part; I should certainly be inclined to think so, for intrigue is foreign to her nature. Good heavens! How impatient I am to see ten years more over this woman's head! If she could only acquire a little self-control, she would be an angel. But if her husband continues to provoke her, her intoxication will only last the longer. Meanwhile, my friend, I must confess to you, that all these fine ladies and the amiable Margency displease me; "the Syndic," however, makes me laugh. But what is laughter when the soul is sad? It only makes the latter more uncomfortable after the outburst.

I have certainly observed, in the case of Margency, one of those every-day truths which always strike me as if they were new. This is, that the mind and character are always depicted in the most unimportant things. Monsieur de Margency is only the outline or the extract of everything agreeable; he is a collection of admirable trifles. I was admiring the spectacle of nature, admiring it on a large scale; its masses alone had struck me; his attention was only arrested by details. I was contemplating the majesty of the forest of Épinay. He would have liked to count the leaves; he examined each of them one by one. If any one of them exhibited to him a form that was in any way peculiar, it possessed no claim on his admiration; this is the reason why he unhesitatingly prefers Racine to Corneille, opera to tragedy, Grandison to Clarissa.

Let me say a few words about my health, for you would never forgive me for passing it over in silence. I began to take asses' milk yesterday, and it agrees with me very well. I diet myself so severely that you would be unable to endure it. I sleep tolerably well; I do not expose myself to the sun or the evening dew; I never walk without my carriage following me. That is all you recommended and what the physicians require me to do. I am very strict in regard to this, you can feel assured of that. Do you be equally strict in telling me about yourself, I beg of you; never write me a letter without letting me know the state of your health.

From M. GRIMM *to* MADAME D'ÉPINAY.

Wesel, 11 *p.m.*

I have arrived, Madame, and although I have great need of repose, I cannot make up my mind to rest until I have written to you. I have received through M. de S * * * two letters from you which have restored me to life. I am still ignorant of the arrangement of the couriers. M. le Maréchal is sending one off to-morrow. If he is despatched this evening, he will bring you this note; if not until to-morrow, I hope you will receive a volume. I tremble to think of the disturbed life I am going to lead. Oh, how I am to be pitied!

Adieu! Madame. I write to nobody. I am in excellent health, but I am knocked up. Give my respects to Madame your mother.

END OF VOL. II